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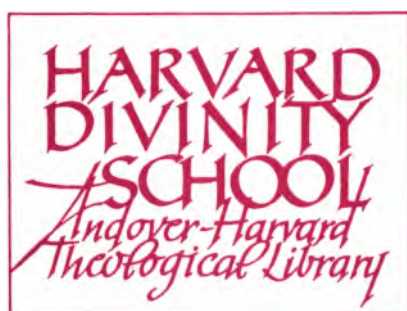
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THE MIDDLE AGE.

HISTORY
OF
METHODISM IN
IRELAND.

VOL. II.
THE MIDDLE AGE.

BY
C. H. CROOKSHANK, M.A.,
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Irish Methodism in the Last Century."*

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HISTORY OF METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

1789.

ABOUT the time of the Rev. J. Wesley's last visit to Ireland a most important movement commenced, which aimed at the conversion of the Roman Catholic population, by preaching to them in their own language. Although similar efforts had been put forth, attended with more or less success, they were unorganized, comparatively few in number, and exceedingly limited in their sphere of operation. A translation of the New Testament into Irish commenced by Bishop Walsh, and completed by William Daniel, was published in 1602. Twenty or thirty years subsequently, Bishop Bedell, being most desirous to provide the people with the whole Bible in their own tongue, engaged one of the best native scholars in the country to undertake the work, and so deeply was the good bishop interested in its execution, that at the age of sixty he commenced to learn the language himself, hoping to be able to render some assistance in the way of revision. He was not, however, permitted to proceed in this noble undertaking without disturbance. Romanists, of course, looked on it with aversion ; but, strange to say, so also did some of his own brethren. Archbishop Laud, then in the zenith of his power, regarded it with disfavour, and prevailed on the Irish Viceroy to concur with him. The translator was subjected to annoyance and persecution, and the work when finished remained about half a century in manuscript.

The Lower House of Convocation, in 1703, passed a resolution desiring the appointment in every parish of an Irish-speaking

minister, Trinity College made arrangements for teaching the language, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge offered assistance. The practical results, however, of these promising proposals were exceedingly small, being confined to two or three parishes. The Rev. Nicholas Brown, rector of Rossorry in Fermanagh, and the Rev. Walter Atkins, rector of Middleton, read the liturgy and instructed the Romanists in their own language, with considerable success. The poor Catholics showed the greatest interest in hearing the services of the Church read in Irish, and when their priests endeavoured to dissuade them from attending by saying that these prayers were stolen from the Church of Rome, an old man shrewdly replied, "If so, they have stolen the best, as thieves generally do." The example of these two clergymen was followed by a few others; but as the Government discountenanced these efforts, and several bishops, in consequence, threw obstacles in the way, the good of immortal souls was sacrificed to a miserable and short-sighted policy.

In 1738, Dr. Samuel Madden, a devoted and influential philanthropist, warmly advocated the employment of a number of itinerant clergy to preach to the natives in Irish; and Bishop Berkeley not only supported the project, but intimated that, in the lack of ordained missionaries, persons less educated but conversant with Irish, and well instructed in the first principles of religion, should be sent among the people. These proposals, however, did not lead to any practical results; and nothing further was attempted by the Established Church during the last century.

Such an important means of usefulness was soon recognised and employed by the Methodists. Thomas Walsh, the first Irish Wesleyan missionary, was a perfect master of the language, fully alive to the power for good he thus possessed, and animated by a passion to save souls; he seized every available opportunity of proclaiming to his fellow-countrymen in their own tongue the Gospel of the grace of God, and with wonderful success. Hundreds of the Irish heard the word with joy, received it into their hearts, and brought forth fruit in lives consecrated to the service of Christ. But Walsh was alone in this work, had ample employment in the regular duties of the itinerancy, and his career though brilliant was brief.

The preaching of Wesley and his coadjutors was not without indirect benefit to the native population. In the counties where the Irish language was most spoken, Methodism won numerous triumphs, many of the upper and middle ranks of society embraced the truth, and in some cases these persons were familiar with Irish, and became faithful interpreters of the word preached to their neighbours, servants, and workpeople, who were thus brought to a saving knowledge of God. Frequently, when the preacher stopped at the house of one of these gentlemen, the schoolmaster and other Roman Catholics in the neighbourhood were invited, and the evenings spent in reading the Irish Bible, comparing it with the English version, and making such useful and practical observations as would be suggested. These efforts, however beneficial, could be brought into but limited operation, and were by no means commensurate with the moral necessities of the people.

During Dr. Coke's tour through Ireland in 1786, an incident occurred of little importance in itself yet deeply interesting as leading to very blessed and glorious results. When in Sligo, being impressed with the necessity of preaching to the Irish-speaking population in their own language, he asked Charles Graham if he could do so, and was told that he could not, having never attempted it, although he could speak in Irish very well. The doctor wondered very much at this, but Graham adroitly answered, by asking if he considered that every Christian who spoke English could preach in it. So the conversation ended; but the question did not rest there. The young disciple thought over the subject, made the attempt, and succeeded beyond his expectations. A vast concourse assembled, and God was present in power and blessing. The Romanists declared they never heard anything like it, and encouraged the evangelist to preach for them again, which he gladly did. Soon the priest took alarm, affirmed that the Methodist was a wolf in sheep's clothing, and forbade any of his flock to go near him. The Lord then opened another door at some distance, where all appeared hopeful for a time, and many heard the word of life in their own loved tongue. But here also persecution arose, for the Episcopal minister as well as the priest opposed this new way of working. Thus the Lord prepared His servant for a wider field and greater usefulness.

When Mr. Black came to the Sligo circuit, after the Conference of 1789, he told Graham that he had invited Bartley Campbell, "the Lough Derg Pilgrim," as he was called, to come and assist him in the work. This uncouth but devoted evangelist came in due course, but found to his great sorrow that Mr. Black had been suddenly called to the home above, having been drowned a few days before while bathing. However, Graham and Campbell determined to persevere in their contemplated work, and travelled through the country, preaching in Irish; multitudes flocked to hear, especially Romanists, and great numbers were converted.

Invitations were sent to the zealous evangelists to visit neighbouring circuits, and they responded to one from Mr. Barber of Longford, where they laboured with great success. After some time Campbell returned home, and Graham, at the earnest request of the Assistant, remained on the circuit until Conference, leaving his wife and farm to take care of themselves. Mrs. Graham wrote to him, thus, "Go, and labour away for God; I will abide by the stuff, and share the last penny to sustain you in all your expenses." "This," said he, "was as fresh oil to the wheel, and I bounded as a hart." On this circuit he had full scope for his talents, preaching daily in English and Irish, and with great acceptance and success.

As has been stated ten preachers were received on trial at the Conference this year. These included Samuel Wood of Waterford, and James Irwin of the county of Armagh, who had been called out during the previous twelve months, Thomas Ridgeway of Edenderry, Andrew Hamilton, jun. of Londonderry, James M'Quigg, and Thomas Worrell, each of whom subsequently was made exceedingly useful.

While thus the Lord blessed the labours of His servants, they were also cheered in witnessing the triumphant end of some of those who had been led to the Saviour. One of these, Jane Newland, claims special notice. She was an humble but devoted member of the Society in Dublin. In August, this excellent woman was seized with a nervous fever, from which she but partially recovered; a weakness remained, attended with a violent cough, and pain in her side, which terminated in death. At intervals during her illness she expressed herself thus: "I am

now going into eternity. Zion has been all my care, my cry has ever been, 'Lord, prosper Zion.' I have often felt so much for its prosperity, that I thought my heart would break. O how have I mourned over the careless! I feel a hope that God will bless the Methodists more powerfully. I love them, they are near my heart. Come, let us languish for more of the love of Christ. Let us not be content till we bathe in that ocean,—till we are lost and swallowed up in God. O the delightful days I now spend! The language of my heart is, 'Lord, let me hear, see, and feel nothing but Thee.' My soul is ravished with the thought that I shall shortly be with my dear Lord. He has been pleased to show me great things of late. I have been so led to view the glories of the invisible world, that I have often desired neither to see nor hear any person or thing around me. One day in particular I was apparently in a swoon, and felt as if the curtain was raised, and I was permitted to view my Beloved on the throne, and the elders, cherubim and seraphim, and all the company falling down before Him, and crying, 'The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Hallelujah!' I was quite overcome, and could say nothing but, 'O the glory! O the glory!' I feel my spirit united to those of the invisible world, and see the angels rejoicing to meet me. They shout the praises of the Redeemer, and I shall partake in the song which now overwhelms me. O glorious triumph! Who would not wish to die? Once I thought I could not leave my friends, they were so dear to me; but now I can with joy bid them all farewell. O Jesus, what hast thou done for me! Glory, eternal glory to Thee, that ever I was born to taste such joys! O that all the world knew them!

'None is like Jeshurun's God,
So great, so strong, so high.'

"O 'the unsearchable riches of Christ'! Help me to praise Him.

"I am now drawing very near to eternity, and the thought of dying delights my soul." At another time, seeing her mother standing by her side, she looked steadfastly at her; and, having grasped her hand, said: "I am going to leave you, but God will be your Friend. I feel no more at the thoughts of death, than at lying on this bed." She then sang:

“Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
 I’ll break through every foe ;
 The wings of love and arms of faith
 Will bear me conqueror through ;”

and immediately added : “ I will shout ‘ Victory, victory ! ’ when I get on the other side of Jordan.” From this she seemed to gather new life, and cried out as in an ecstasy, “ O glorious eternity ! glorious eternity ! ” After a short sleep she repeated the lines :

“ Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
 And let me languish into life.”

And then cried in a joyful tone : “ I shall soon be at rest. O, it is a pleasing thought that I am so near home ! I will tell them on the heavenly shore you are all hastening home.” She paused, and then added : “ Shout the Name I love—Sweet Jesus ! Precious Jesus ! O my loving Saviour, I had no idea of the great things Thou hast done for my soul.” When some one spoke to her of the rest she would shortly enjoy, she calmly said :

“ I shall behold His face,
 I shall His power adore ;
 And sing the wonders of His grace
 For evermore.”

At length she became so weak that her voice failed her for some time ; but, having recovered it, she said : “ Who would not live to God in their health ? ” And then, with evident solicitude : “ O, what delays His chariot-wheels ? ” Being asked whether she found Jesus precious, she replied, “ Lovely, altogether lovely ! Help me to praise Him.” And added : “ My tongue grows thick ; that is delightful ; everything which brings me nearer eternity increases my joy.” She then cried with a strong voice, “ The Lord God omnipotent reigneth ! Sing to the Lord a joyful song. Let all the earth praise Him. ‘ Glory, blessing, and power, be to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.’ ” On the morning of the day on which she died she said : “ Come, Lord Jesus, and let me behold Thy glory. What are all my sufferings now I am come to a death-bed ? My breath will not admit of time to talk of anything but Jesus.” After having awoke from a short sleep,

she said: "Whenever I fall into a slumber, I dream of Divine things. Just now I thought I was in a delightful pasture, conversing with one who said, 'You will finish your course this day.' This indeed is victory. I shall soon be wafted far above on the wings of angels." She asked what o'clock it was; and, having been told it was ten, replied with a degree of surprise, "What? ten, and not gone yet?" and then added, in a soft voice, "I am going to glory." Some one who came to see her repeated the words: "O the pain, the bliss of dying!" She answered: "The bliss, the bliss! The pain is nothing,"—though at the time her sufferings were exquisite. Soon afterwards she desired to be turned in her bed, said, "I am now easy," and then, looking steadfastly at her mother, pressed her hand, and added, "I have fought the good fight." These were her last words; after which she lay quiet for a few minutes, and, without a struggle or groan, sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Turning our attention to other gospel triumphs. In the north the truth as taught by the Methodists had to contend not only with the doctrines of the Romish Church, but with the rigid Calvinism of one set of Presbyterians, and the Unitarianism of another and highly influential body. There were some interesting converts from the latter. One of these was Thomas Brown, who was brought into great distress about his sins and saw no possible way of deliverance except that which he had been taught to despise as foolishness—that of faith in the Incarnate God as the propitiation. His distress increased more and more till "One day," said he, "I fell on my knees in an agony, and said 'O, Lord, if Jesus Christ is God, let me know it.' Quick as the lightning's flash, the Saviour was revealed to my inmost soul, and I cried aloud, 'My Lord and my God.'" No sooner was this young man made happy in the love of Christ than he began to feel for those whom he saw living regardless of their salvation, and remaining in that awful state of guilt and danger out of which he had been so blessedly delivered; and through the Divine blessing on his efforts many were awakened and turned to God.

Young Brown, having given indications of those superior ministerial talents, for which he was subsequently distinguished, was employed as a local preacher, and sent to the county of Donegal.

Here, William Hamilton and he were the means of introducing Methodism into the town of Ballyshannon, under rather stormy auspices. A room in the barrack was secured for holding a service, and many assembled, including a number of rowdies, who blew out the candles, and then began to use their fists very freely. Brown fled out of the town for his life, but finding himself alone resolved to live or die with his brethren, and returning to the scene of conflict met the mob in hot pursuit of William Hamilton, and turned and pursued the preacher with them until they came to the road leading to the house where the servants of God were entertained. Here he found several of the members wounded and bleeding. Nothing daunted he published for another service on the following Sunday evening; but when the time came, no one would accompany him into Ballyshannon, as the rowdies had vowed vengeance against any of the Methodists who dared to enter the town. Brown, however, having disguised himself in the clothes of a stonemason, went, escaped their observation, and got a room in the house of John Hanley; the commanding officer sent a number of soldiers for the protection of the preacher, and the Freemasons also came to his help. Two or three times during the meeting the door was opened by spies sent to reconnoitre, who when they saw how the land lay, went away. Soon afterwards Brown formed a class, which became very large. He also went to many new places, sometimes wading through deep waters in order to preach to the people.*

At this time Mr. Burgess was quartered in Belturbet, where he had become a member of the Society ten years previously. The friends in the town had in the meantime erected a neat chapel, but had not been able to furnish it with a pulpit, so he supplied this lack. He was also encouraged by Mr. Joseph Armstrong, who had charge of the circuit, to speak in the name of the Lord. Accordingly he went in company with a friend to Enniskillen, where he preached his first sermon. After this he found his mind greatly relieved, and embraced all convenient opportunities of calling sinners to repentance. His preaching caused a great sensation in the barrack, and throughout the town. Many assembled to hear, and it pleased God to give him several seals

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1873, p. 26.

to his ministry. Lieutenant Carrothers, who had been a regular attendant at church and the Lord's table, and on that account thought himself a very good Christian, was convinced of sin the first time he heard Mr. Burgess preach, and led to feel that he had only been saying "Lord, Lord," without doing the will of his Father in heaven. He became a member of the Society, was converted, and some years subsequently wrote to Mr. Burgess, saying, that his health was declining, but he had a good hope through grace of heaven; and, added he, "When I get there, next to my Saviour, I shall have to thank you, my dear Joseph, as the instrument of my salvation." His end was peace.

Soon after Mr. Burgess began to preach one of the quartermasters went to hear him, seemed much affected, and as he left exclaimed, "Did ever any one speak like that man? and the beauty of it is that when he describes a real Christian, he draws his own character." About the same time as one of the soldiers' wives, a thoughtless and turbulent woman, stood at her door, and saw him pass, she thought, "There is a man that is going to heaven; but where am I going?" Her slumbering conscience was instantly aroused, and answered, as with a voice of thunder, "to hell." This was not a transient conviction; she was brought under a deep sense of her sinfulness and danger, began to attend the means of grace, broke off her evil practices, and earnestly sought Divine mercy. She became a changed woman, and it is to be hoped continued steadfast in the way of righteousness.

Shortly before the regiment left Belturbet, Mr. Burgess was invited to Ballyhaise, where he was entertained by a man who did a good business as a blacksmith, and also had a small farm. He was the principal support of Methodism in the town, received the preachers regularly; and when the quarterly meetings were held used to provide a plentiful dinner for those who attended, many of whom had to come a considerable distance. There was then in Ballyhaise, a young lady in a delicate state of health, and seriously concerned for the salvation of her soul. Having been much profited by hearing the Methodist preachers she wished to join the Society; but to this her husband, a local surgeon, was decidedly opposed. He had formed the opinion that the preachers were a set of ignorant enthusiasts, who went about to get a livelihood, and though he did not prohibit his wife from hearing them,

he feared it would greatly lower his respectability as well as her own. When, however, informed that Mr. Burgess was coming, the thought arose that here certainly was a man who did not preach for temporal gain, whom therefore he would hear. He listened very attentively to the important truths, which were earnestly explained and enforced; and, at the close of the service, respectfully saluted the preacher and thanked him for the sermon. Not long afterwards Mr. Burgess received a letter from him stating that since he heard that discourse he had been seeking and had at length happily found redemption in the blood of Christ; and that he and his wife being of one heart and one mind had joined the Society, and were resolved through Divine grace to be wholly given up to the service of God. He subsequently became a very devoted man, zealously engaged in promoting the spiritual welfare of his fellow-creatures, and proved a great blessing to the neighbourhood.

But to pass from the county of Cavan to that of Armagh. Thomas Shillington, at this time a young man of twenty-two, resided at Aghagallon, and occasionally was present at the Wesleyan services till his father took a farm for him at Drumcree in the neighbourhood of Derryanvil, where he attended them regularly; and the preaching of the word was made a great blessing to him. The report soon reached his parents that he had joined the Methodists, and when they questioned him on the subject found he was only a hearer. His father said there was not much harm in that, provided he did not make a practice of it; but afterwards strongly objected to it, and used all possible means to prevent it. Through God's help, however, the young man stood firm, and united himself to the Society, with the hearty determination that this people should be his people, and their God his God—a step he never retraced or regretted. Six weeks after he had thus become a Methodist he was appointed to take charge of a class, and thus entered upon a course of extensive and great usefulness.

In the district of country in which Mr. Shillington resided, at Bluestone, in the parish of Seagoe, a Sunday school was opened during this year. A rock or immense stone formerly stood there, at a place where three roads met, and was dreadfully famous as the rendezvous of lawless bands, who posted on it their illegal

and threatening notices. At length some murderers having been seized, tried, and convicted, were executed on this spot, and their remains, together with the bluestone, buried there. The place, however, has retained the name, and thus a memorial of what it once was. The founder of the school was Joseph Malcomson, who was spared for about a half a century to work for Christ, and rejoice in the abundant blessing which rested on his labours. Bluestone, from being a byword for all that is evil, thus became one of the most orderly and peaceable neighbourhoods in the county.

Another Sunday school, established at this period in Armagh, was at Derryscollop. An excellent leader named Thomas Taylor, came to reside in this most abandoned village. He was deeply impressed with the low moral tone of the rising generation; and the desire was awakened to try and stem the torrent of vice by religious instruction on the Sabbath, and in this he succeeded. He evinced great interest in the scholars, not only teaching them on Sunday, but also meeting in class during the week such of them as gave evidence of conviction of sin. One of those thus impressed was Thomas Wilson, who for more than half a century proved a faithful servant of God.*

At this period there resided at Willmount, near Lisburn, the Stewarts,—lineal descendants of the ancestors of the Earl of Galloway. Mr. Stewart was a gentleman of considerable influence and strict integrity; but an Arian, and much opposed to Evangelical religion. Some of the family, however, by witnessing the consistent Christian conduct and triumphant death of a servant maid, a member of the Methodist Society, were led to see the difference between the cold heartless morality preached by their own ministers, and the doctrines of grace taught in the sacred Scriptures. They were thus brought into connection with Methodism, invited the preachers to their house, and Mrs. Stewart and her nine daughters were savingly converted.†

In time the Rev. Thomas Higginson, an Evangelical clergyman was introduced to the family by the Methodists, and he

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1849, p. 29.

† Three of the Misses Stewart subsequently were married to Evangelical clergymen:—the Revs. B. W. Mathias, Blayney Mitchell, and Edward Hoare, curate of St. Mary's, Leicester.

brought the Rev. B. W. Mathias,—then curate of Drumgooland,—to the house. These clergymen came once a fortnight and conducted religious services, which were attended by large numbers. Thus Mr. Stewart, who had consented to the visits of the servants of God merely to gratify his family, was awakened to a sense of his sinfulness and danger. The Spirit of God gradually dispersed the darkness of his spiritual night, and the Sun of Righteousness arose, shedding heavenly light into his soul, so that he was enabled to say, “My Lord, and my God.” His faith was subsequently greatly strengthened by the happy death of one of his daughters, who rejoiced in the prospect of entering into the immediate presence of her God and Saviour. Shortly after this bereavement Mr. Stewart fell into declining health, and was observed to be much given to thought and prayer. On one occasion, believing his end was approaching, he called his family around him, and entreated them to devote themselves wholly to the Lord. “You know not,” said he, “how much I disliked and despised those whom I now know to be the people of God, and how much I was opposed to His Word,—now it is my delight.” He then requested to have the twenty-third Psalm read, and when it was finished, repeated, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.” “Yes, dear Saviour, Thou art with me! Oh! it is like meeting a loved friend to lean on for support and protection, when surrounded by distress and danger.” And in this spirit of firm faith and joyful hope he entered into rest.

Mr. Bates was this year reappointed, with Nebuchadnezzar Lee, to Omagh, a circuit, to the work of which he felt himself wholly unequal. Some persons advised him to write to Mr. Wesley requesting to be sent elsewhere; but considering the time required for a change, and the loss the cause might sustain by delay, he resolved to take up his cross in the name of the Lord, and set off to his appointed sphere. His position here proved exceedingly trying and discouraging. Left to himself,—his colleague having retired from the work,—in frail health, and the season one of unusual severity, with the accommodation so bad, that he was often obliged to sleep in damp beds or remain in wet clothes, yet he bravely struggled on, at times tempted to retire,

but in view of the value of precious souls and the price paid for their redemption, compelled to do or die. The Lord so supported him that he was enabled to remain at his post until the end of the year ; and he was cheered to find he had not laboured in vain or spent his strength for nought. Fatigue and exposure, however, had done their work, in sowing the seeds of disease which compelled him, at Conference, to become a supernumerary. He lingered a few years in much feebleness and pain, and then, full of hope and joy, fell asleep in the arms of his adorable Redeemer.

CHAPTER II.

1790.

ON January 23rd, 1790, a young man named Matthew Lanktree, a native of Oldcastle, visited at Drumliff, in the county of Cavan, some friends, who had recently become Methodists, accompanied them on the following Sabbath morning to the chapel at Ballyhaise, and was much impressed with all he saw and heard. The preacher was Mr. James Irwin, the house was well filled, and the whole congregation appeared influenced by the spirit of devotion. They sang with melody, prayed with fervency, and heard the word with affectionate attention. All was simplicity and love; and young Lanktree was constrained to own that God was with this people of a truth. In the evening he attended a meeting, conducted by William Phair, a leader whose exhortations and prayers powerfully impressed his mind. On the following Lord's day he commenced meeting with these simple, earnest servants of God, and was brought into deep distress about his soul. The sinfulness of sin, the depravity of his nature, the hour of death, the day of judgment, eternity, and his utter helplessness, all passed before his mind in a most impressive manner, and led him to cry earnestly to Him who is able to save. At length, one Sabbath morning as Mr. Joseph Armstrong preached with great unction from "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," the word came with power to the anxious seeker, and as he returned to Drumliff, God revealed Himself in mercy to his soul.

Having thus obtained a sense of sins forgiven, it became the earnest desire of the young convert that his kinsfolk and friends might be made partakers of the same glorious blessing; so he wrote immediately telling the great things the Lord had done for him. Mr. William Wilson was then stationed in Clones. He had been a teacher in a school near Corneary, in the county of Cavan,

entered the itinerancy in 1788, and was a man of deep piety and thorough acquaintance with the Word of God. By a remarkable Providence, just at this time he felt his mind strongly drawn towards Oldcastle, and accordingly went there, and was in the house of the Lanktrees when Matthew's letter reached them. A service was at once arranged for, during which a profound impression was made on the minds of the people, and a general awakening took place. On returning to the neighbourhood, Mr. Wilson formed a society, consisting of about twenty persons, whom he placed under the care and guidance of young Lanktree. The good work greatly prospered, numerous conversions took place, new classes were formed, and so largely did the congregations increase in the parish church that the building was unable to accommodate the crowds that assembled Sabbath after Sabbath.* The most important additions to the Society were Mr. and Mrs. William Henry of Millbrook, who invited the preachers to their house, became active in promoting the cause of religion, and, until removed to the Church above, more than forty years subsequently, continued faithful to God and to Methodism. Through the influence of this worthy couple a flourishing Sunday school was formed in 1794, which proved the means of much and lasting good in the neighbourhood.†

The work of the Lord having so greatly prospered in Newtown-butler, that the large room of Mr. John Clarke proved too small for the congregations, the Society resolved to build a house. A piece of ground was given by John Adams, who had been for some years a member of the Society; valuable assistance was rendered by Andrew Thompson of Cornabrax, with his son-in-law, Robert Morrison—an acceptable local preacher—and the whole Society engaged heartily in the work, so that in a few months a commodious chapel was erected and dedicated to the service of God. This proved the means of much blessing to the town and neighbourhood, and the birthplace of many souls. John Clarke prospered in his business; during the course of a long life his character for integrity was unimpeachable, and having a good hope through grace of eternal life, his end was peace.

At this time there was led to decision for God a man named

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 11-13.

† *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, 1834, pp. 258-61, and 1837, pp. 441-47.

William Heazley, who is pronounced by Southey "the most extraordinary convert that ever was made." He resided in the county of Antrim, had been deaf and dumb from his birth, was a weaver, farm labourer, and barber—and passionately fond of horse-racing, cock-fighting, and similar brutal diversions. At length the Methodist itinerants visited the locality where he lived, and amongst the many awakened to serious concern was William, who gave evidence of the depth and sincerity of his repentance by an entire change of life, completely renouncing his former associates, and giving up all work on the Sabbath—his most remunerative day. When a society was formed, he rejoiced greatly on seeing his name enrolled with others, and became most zealous for the Master. On the Lord's day it was his custom to rise early in the morning, and watch for the coming of the leader, at sight of whom he immediately ran from house to house, apprising the members, and inviting them to the meeting; and during the class, if the leader happened to omit speaking to him, William appeared much distressed. The remainder of the day was spent in public worship, prayer-meetings, and association with the people of God.*

Up to this period no regular stopping-place for the preachers had been provided in Portadown, owing to the low state of the cause; but this year Mr. Thomas Bunting invited the servants of God to his house, in which was conducted by Mr. Steele, the first love-feast ever held in the town. Not long after this, the building of the first chapel was commenced, and to the small Society of that day it was an undertaking of no ordinary magnitude. Its promoters appear to have had views much in advance of their contemporaries, as the site selected was in a central and prominent position, very near where the Episcopal church now stands. But unexpected difficulties arose, by which not only was the project retarded, but the Society much weakened; and several years elapsed before the chapel was completed.

Mr. James Rogers now closed his three years' labours in Cork, where he had found three hundred and ninety members of Society, and left six hundred and sixty—a number probably unparalleled in that city. Mrs. Rogers says that she never before was happier

* *Arminian Magazine*, 1794, pp. 438-41.

in her soul, or enjoyed deeper communion with God than during her stay here. So much did the work prosper that a second chapel was rendered necessary, which was erected in Blackpool. During a visit of Dr. Coke, a Sunday school was established in Hammond's Marsh, which for many years stood at the head of the list in the reports of the Sunday School Society, and which still exists and flourishes.

The Conference met on July the 2nd, in Dublin, with Dr. Coke as president, and John Crook as secretary. Ten preachers were received on trial, including William Ferguson, Samuel Steele, Charles Graham, and William Smith. Although Graham was a married man, and forty years of age, these circumstances did not interfere with his acceptance, his case, as a preacher in Irish, not being considered an ordinary one. Smith had been in the army, where owing to his musical talents he was appointed bandmaster. His regiment having been quartered in Londonderry, the Society in that city showed their appreciation of his piety and worth by paying fifty pounds for his discharge, in order that he might be able to devote himself wholly to the work of the Lord; and never was that sum better expended. The Connexion thus obtained a minister, who for many years filled most important stations, and was exceedingly able and successful as a preacher.

During the sittings of the Conference, a very blessed revival commenced in the metropolis. On Sunday evening, July 4th, as Dr. Coke preached in Whitefriar street chapel, the word was, accompanied with unusual and mighty power. At the close of the public service a love-feast was held, during which such a gracious influence was felt that it was considered wise to hold a revival prayer-meeting, which proved a second Pentecost. Many cried for mercy, others rejoiced aloud in their Saviour, the preachers and leaders prayed with the penitents and encouraged them to look to Jesus, and a number of boys especially were made so happy that they glorified their Redeemer with all their might. The services were continued night after night with similar success. Some of the conversions were of a remarkable character. One man, though surrounded with many, seemed as much alone with God as if he were in a desert. Another, who had been a Romanist, said, "A few days ago I was a curser and swearer, but to-night,

glory be to God! He has not only enabled me to confess my sins, but has forgiven me, and I can praise Him." The work soon extended to Gravel walk chapel, where as Mr. Dinnen preached on the evening of July 11th, the sacred flame broke out, and spread from heart to heart until the whole congregation seemed on fire. A young woman who came to mock, when faithfully and lovingly reproved, burst into tears, and in less than an hour afterwards could say, she had found the Lord, who had filled her heart with love and peace. Many similar testimonies were borne by others.* One of those converted was Mr. James Freeman, son of the leader who took such an active part in the erection of this very chapel. This young man then joined the Society, and from that time until his death in 1832, was never once absent from class, except from illness.

Meanwhile the British Conference met on July 27th, and made several important changes in the stations of the Dublin Conference. A Building Committee for Ireland was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Blair, Clarke, Rutherford, and Mitchell. Joseph Burgess, having offered himself as a candidate for the itinerancy, was received on trial, and appointed to Liverpool, with permission to remain in Dublin for a month or two, to complete his arrangements for leaving the army. Here he preached frequently in Whitefriar street and Gravel walk chapels, and attracted crowded congregations. Thomas Worrell and James Lyons, senior, were sent as missionaries to the West Indies. The former was a very promising young man of considerable gifts, and eminent piety, who after an indefatigable and successful missionary career of a little more than twelve months passed in triumph to the home above.†

Adam Clarke was appointed Assistant in Dublin, where he and his family were received with much cordiality. "The people," writes Mrs. Clarke to a friend, "appear affectionate and willing to do us good; if they could help it we should scarcely eat a meal at home. They esteem our company a privilege, and invite many friends on set days to meet us, especially to break-fast. These meetings in a particular manner I have found to be profitable for wisdom and instruction in the best things; they

* Coke's Account of the Revival in Dublin.

† *Arminian Magazine*, 1792, p. 272.

are also sociable beyond what I can express. A Dublin breakfast meeting I know you would delight in. I wish I could introduce you to one to-morrow morning.”*

The metropolis, however, was not at this time in many respects a very desirable appointment. On arriving at the city, Mr. Clarke found that the Society was engaged in building a new residence, with which was connected a large room for the boys’ free school. It was erected under the superintendence of Mr. Dederick Ayckbowm, aided by Messrs. William Andrews and Alexander Boyle, formerly of Kirlish Lodge, the stewards of the Society. The preacher and his family were to occupy the lower part and first floor, and the school was to extend over the whole of the second floor. Owing to the builder being an unprincipled man, the house was not made either according to the time or plan specified. Mr. Clarke and his family were, therefore, obliged to go into lodgings, which were far from comfortable; and then, owing to the inconvenience, to enter the new house before it was dry, which nearly cost them their lives, and compelled their return to England at the end of twelve months.

Soon after Mr. Clarke arrived in Dublin, he wrote to Mr. Wesley a long letter, stating that his colleague Mr. Rutherford had been laid aside by rheumatic fever, and that the results of the revival already referred to, had been destroyed by the extravagant irregularities of those who conducted the services during Mr. Rutherford’s illness. These meetings were kept up till ten or eleven o’clock on Sunday nights, and sometimes till twelve or one; and it was no uncommon thing for a person in the midst of them to give an exhortation of half-an-hour or three-quarters. Mr. Clarke wished to correct these irregularities, and wrote for advice to Wesley,† who replied as follows:—

“You will have need of all the courage and prudence which God has given you. Very gently, and very steadily, you should proceed between the rocks on either hand. In the great revival at London, my first difficulty was to bring in temper those who opposed the work, and my next, to check and regulate the extravagances of those that promoted it. And this was far the hardest part of the work; for many of them would bear no check

* Life of Mrs. Clarke, p. 83.

† Tyerman’s Life and Times of Wesley, iii., p. 623.

at all. But I followed one rule, though with all calmness: 'You must either bend or break.' Meantime, while you act exactly right, expect to be blamed by both sides. I will give you a few directions: (1) See that no prayer-meeting continues later than nine at night, particularly on Sunday. Let the house be emptied before the clock strikes nine. (2) Let there be no exhortation at any prayer-meeting. (3) Beware of jealousy, or judging one another. (4) Never think a man is an enemy to the work, because he reproves irregularities.*

Clarke acted upon Wesley's good advice, wrote him the result, and received the following reply:—"I am glad my letter had so good an effect. I dearly love our precious Society in Dublin, and cannot but be keenly sensible of anything that gives them disturbance. I am glad our leaders have adopted that excellent method of regularly changing their classes. Wherever this has been done, it has been a means of quickening both the leaders and the people. I wish this custom could be more extensively introduced. You did well to prevent all irregular and turbulent prayer-meetings, and at all hazards, to keep the meetings of the Society private. Poor Mr. Smyth† is now used just as he used me. He must either bend or break. Although you cannot solicit any of the Bethesda to join with us, yet neither can you refuse them when they offer their hand. You do well to offer all possible courtesy to Mr. William Smyth and his family. As long as the Society in Dublin continues upward of a thousand, you will have no reason to complain."‡

Details have already been given with regard to the disputes in the Dublin Society concerning the Sunday noon service in Whitefriar street chapel, at which the liturgy was read. Much good might have been done if the rich members had not continued hostile to the arrangement. At length both sides had agreed, for the sake of peace, to request the British Conference to restore matters to their original state, by abolishing the service objected to. Mr. Clarke raised his voice against the innovation, before coming to the city, and at his recommendation the Conference yielded. This he subsequently regarded as the greatest ecclesiastical error he ever committed, and one which he deeply deplored.

* Wesley's Works, xiii., p. 104.

† Rev. Edward Smyth.

‡ Tyerman's Wesley, iii., p. 624.

What he did was from fear that the service might lead to a separation from the Church, and the hope that the members might be induced to attend the parish churches, and so all kinds of dissent be prevented. But many of them never had belonged to any church, and felt no religious attachment to any ministers but those who were the means of their salvation. When therefore they did not find among the Methodists religious services at the usual hours on the Lord's day, they often wandered heedlessly about, and became unhinged and distracted with strange doctrines. Of this Mr. Clarke was afterwards fully convinced, and saw the folly of endeavouring to force people to attend a ministry from which they never received any kind of spiritual advantage; and the danger of not trying carefully to cultivate the soil which with great difficulty and labour has been broken up and sown with the good seed of the kingdom.

While in the metropolis Mr. Clarke instituted the Strangers' Friend Society, for the purpose of relieving sick and distressed strangers, and the poor of every denomination, in their own dwellings; similar associations having been formed previously in London and Bristol. This Society has done a noble work for Christ, thousands having been rescued by it from the greatest misery, and not a few brought to a saving knowledge of God; and it still exists, a monument of the wisdom and benevolence of its illustrious founder.

On November the 26th Mr. Wesley wrote to Mr. Clarke as follows: "To retain the grace of God is much more than to gain it; hardly one in three does this. And this should be strongly and explicitly urged on all who have tasted of perfect love. If we can prove that any of our local preachers or leaders, either directly or indirectly speak against it, let him be a local preacher or leader no longer. I doubt whether he should continue in the Society; because he that could speak thus in our congregations, cannot be an honest man." *

But to turn from Dublin to the provinces, Charles Graham was appointed as a missionary to the county of Kerry, where there was at this time neither Society or congregation, and his reception was of the most discouraging kind. After a ride of nearly forty

* Wesley's Works, xiii., pp. 104-5.

miles, he arrived at Castleisland, and was no sooner settled in the hotel than it was noised abroad that a false prophet had come to the town. Immediately the priest collected a mob, came to the inn, and insisted that the stranger should be turned out, which of course had to be done to please his reverence. Graham then started for Tralee, and when about half-way, called at a farm house, told his tale of ill-treatment, and was at once invited in. The host, who proved to be a staunch Protestant, sent out and collected a congregation for the missionary, and was himself deeply affected under the preaching of the word. Next morning Mr. Groves bade the servant of God welcome to stay at his house as long and as frequently as he pleased. Thus Methodism at once obtained a footing in the county.

Cheered by this opening, Graham proceeded to Tralee, little knowing what awaited him there. He describes the town as notorious for folly and dissipation, and one in which he could not get a room for love or money; so he had no alternative but to deliver his message in the street, where he addressed "an unruly group of gapers," who raised such an uproar that he had to desist. But it was only to try again, with more success. Having taken his stand in the same place as before, the following plan was immediately adopted by two men to stone the servant of God to death. One of the wretched scoundrels took a position behind a wall, while the other stood near the preacher, to direct his companion. The signal was given, and the stone thrown, but missing the missionary, it struck the accomplice, who was carried off to the infirmary, seriously cut, and crying aloud for mercy. From this time forward the servant of God was allowed to preach in the town unmolested.

From Tralee Graham went to Milltown, on entering which he inquired of a lad, if he knew anyone in the town who read the Bible. "Oh, yes, I do, sir," responded the boy; "the clerk of the church." "Will you show me where he lives?" said the missionary, and the lad conducted him to the door of the man's house. When he came out, Graham said, "I understand that you read the Bible." "Oh! I do, sir," replied the clerk, "on the Sabbath, at church; but the Lord help me, I make a very bad use of it." "I am a preacher of the Gospel," said the missionary, "and would like to preach here." "Will you come in?" re-

sponded the other. This day salvation came to this man's house, and thenceforward it was the stopping place of the preachers. Being a holiday, the town was filled with country people, Graham took his stand on a block, opposite the market-house, and delivered his message faithfully, both in English and Irish, the latter being well understood. The word was "quick and powerful," the clerk was converted, and many deeply affected. The tidings of the service reached Sir William Godfrey, Bart., the lord of the soil, who at once sent a message to the missionary not to preach there again; but Graham had published that he would do so, and was of sterner stuff than to be intimidated by an order of that kind. Accordingly he preached, expecting every moment to be interrupted; the people assembled in large numbers, the power of God descended, and many received the message of salvation. Thus a foundation was laid for the cause in this town, which after a little time became the head of a circuit.

Thence Graham travelled round the country, and open doors presented themselves in all directions; societies also were formed that included several converted Roman Catholics. It was reported that the missionary had been a priest, but this only increased his audiences, many coming to hear from mere curiosity. The Catholic Bishop of Kerry took alarm, and charged his clergy to warn their people not to hear or go near the Methodist, that he was "a deceiver" and "a walking devil." One of the priests who had abused the missionary more fiercely than the rest, fell down stairs the same night in a drunken fit, and broke his neck. This alarmed the whole country, but apparently not the clergy; for another priest met Graham shortly after, and threatened to make him leave the county. The missionary said he would not leave for him or anybody else. On this the priest raised a cane to strike him, but was prevented by some bystanders, and a few days subsequently died raging mad. Such tragic circumstances could not fail to make a deep and general impression.

In another part of the county, the priest called out from the altar the names of sixteen persons who had gone to hear Graham preach, and insisted that each should go through bogs by night to a distant graveyard, barefooted and bareheaded, and bring back a human bone, and then appear, on the following Sabbath, in a

sheet, bone in hand, before the congregation. Even some of the clergy of the Established Church opposed the preacher. But all did not avail. The common people still heard the servant of God gladly, for he made the way of salvation plain, and that in their own loved language. Even among the higher classes also there were some who saw his worth and hailed his visits with delight, and the Lord gave him many souls for his hire. The following instances may suffice.

The bursar on board a man-of-war, then in Dingle harbour, was a rigid Roman Catholic, although his wife was a Protestant. This lady heard Mr. Graham preach, and the word reached her heart, so that she penitently sought and found the pearl of great price, and at once joined the Society recently formed in the town. This greatly exasperated her husband, who tried every means in his power to dissuade her from uniting with such a despised sect, until at length he resorted to violence, but in vain. On one occasion he followed her to the preaching place, bludgeon in hand, to watch for her coming out; but attracted by Graham's melodious and powerful voice, he entered the house, greatly to the terror of those present. He was then completely subdued, earnestly sought the mercy of God, and went home with his rejoicing wife a pardoned and happy man. At once he renounced Popery, joined the Society, and continued during the rest of life to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour.

Another remarkable conversion was that of a bigoted devotee of Rome, named Roche, an abandoned drunkard, who came to one of the services to mock, but remained to pray. The word reached his heart; he sought and found mercy through Christ Jesus, and although much thwarted by his wife and bitterly persecuted by others, continued consistent and faithful, and finished his course with joy. Graham received during the year about two hundred members into the Society, besides many on trial. Most appropriately has he been designated, "the Apostle of Kerry."*

On September the 1st Mr. M'Gregor writes from Limerick to Mrs. Bennis, then in Waterford: "The Society here prospers; the select band meets regularly; but I can seldom be with them. I generally meet my class in my room, often in my bed. Blessed

* The Apostle of Kerry, pp. 38-46.

be God, for the love that subsists among us; they will not let me give them up until I am removed to my heavenly Father, which I expect will not be long. My sincere love to the Waterford preachers and people; remind them that this is a year of release and thanksgiving for their passage out of trouble; let us meet each other in spirit for the prosperity of the Gospel.”*

In 1790, the Association of Friends of the Sick Poor was formed at Waterford. It originated at an evening social gathering of Methodists, in a conversation on the Christian duty of visiting the sick and those in prison, which ended in making a small collection. With this the brethren present called upon the prisoners in the jail on the following Sabbath, accompanying their pecuniary assistance with suitable religious counsel. The first experiment excited the hope that this labour of love might be made extensively and permanently beneficial. Among the members of the Society willing hearts and hands were found to co-operate in it, and a good working plan was drawn up by Mr. Robert Mackee, a leader and local preacher. The city was divided into districts, to each of which visitors were appointed, whose duty it was to inquire into, and personally inspect all cases of alleged sickness and infirmity; to give relief according to the exigency of each case, irrespective of religious distinctions; and to accompany the help afforded, whenever practicable, with suitable religious advice. An institution founded on such broad principles soon attracted public attention; funds were contributed by Christians of all denominations, and much good was accomplished. From this society originated the admirable Fever Hospital, the first institution of the kind, it is said, raised by voluntary contributions and on truly catholic principles, founded in the kingdom. In all times of distress the Association did most valuable service in guiding and assisting the distribution of public charity.

At this period a young man named Joseph Leech, who lived in Roscrea, was deeply impressed through the ministry of the Methodist preachers, began to meet in a class conducted by a good old leader called Rowland, and soon after obtained a sense of sins forgiven. From this time until his death, in 1860, the life of

* Christian Correspondence, p. 198.

Mr. Leech was interwoven with the history of Methodism on the Roscrea circuit. The cause in the town was then very low, so much so that the members were compelled on the occasional visits of the preacher to contribute a few pence each to buy hay for his horse. Better days, however, dawned on the Society, which soon increased in numbers and wealth, until it rose to be one of the most influential in the kingdom. Mr. Leech became in succession leader, local preacher, and steward of the Society, and was for many years the pillar of Methodism in the town.

A short time before the Conference this year, Mr. Robert Boyd, whom Walter Griffith designates one of the holiest men he had known, died of a malignant fever. For many years he had been an honour to, and the principal financial support of the Society in Newry. He was engaged in business, possessed some property, and, having no children alive, after supplying the daily wants of himself and his wife, faithfully devoted every shilling that he made to the promotion of the cause of God, and the relief of persons in need. He was taken to his eternal reward when just past the prime of life, and in the midst of extensive usefulness. A short time previously he dreamed that he had a conversation with a son of his who had been dead several years, and who informed him, that before the end of the ensuing three weeks he also would be in the world of spirits. His friends endeavoured to divert his attention from this alarming communication; but he said that until the expiration of the time named he should feel himself on the borders of the eternal world. In the meantime his mind was calm, and exceedingly happy in God; nor did he remit his usual diligence in business, settling his temporal affairs with the composure of a man whose treasure was in heaven. Recollecting that he had to take up a bill in the course of a few days, he waited upon the man who held it, offered him payment, and when informed that it was not yet due, insisting on then paying the amount, adding that he might be dead when the proper time arrived. Soon afterwards, one night he retired to his room, without any symptoms of disease, and was seized by the terrible malady, which proved fatal, a short time before the expiration of the three weeks. Then the disease, of which her devoted husband had just expired, seized Mrs. Boyd, and

she followed him to another and better world. They were lovely in life, and in death they were not long divided.*

When the congregation assembled, on the evening after Mr. Boyd's death, and began to sing, they became so deeply affected as to be unable to proceed. At that service there commenced such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as the oldest members of the Society had never before witnessed. Mr. Griffith preached the funeral sermons of Mr. and Mrs. Boyd, upon two successive Sunday evenings, to attentive and crowded audiences. With holy fervour and lively faith he pleaded with God for a rich baptism of His Spirit, and the prayer was answered; though, in consequence of the preacher's removal to another circuit, he was not an eye-witness of its blessed results. The congregations increased, Divine power accompanied the word preached, and a solemn awe prevailed at each service. Few nights passed without a prayer meeting after preaching, chiefly for the penitents, whose cries could be heard at a considerable distance from the chapel. Many of the careless and profane gathered about the house, wondering what was the matter, but were not admitted, lest they should disturb those who continued with one accord in earnest prayer. Some pious persons, who were only acquainted with God's ordinary method of working, began to reflect a little on what seemed to them confusion; but having seen the blessed effects they were fully satisfied, and heartily thanked God for thus working among the children of men.

September the 8th was a night much to be remembered; not only because of those converted, but also because of the spirit of prayer poured out so wonderfully that many went away under deep conviction. A man who loved God with all his heart, said, as the people left, "Such of you, as have not received the blessing now, will assuredly receive it to-morrow night;" and it was so. Messrs. M'Donald and Grace, having been out of town on this evening, on their return saw several persons just set at liberty, praising God and full of joy, and others pleading for mercy; so they went to different parts of the house, and prayed with the penitents, some of whom soon had their sorrow turned into joy. Amongst others Mr. Grace found a man in deep

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1827, pp. 150 51.

distress, who twenty years before had turned his back on the ways of God and given himself up to drunkenness, and now while engaged in prayer, his backslidings were healed. On seeing him rejoice in the Divine favour, his wife, who had for some time walked in darkness, was informed of it. She then joined her husband, and they united in earnest prayer until the Lord restored unto her also the joys of His salvation.

Mr. M'Donald sent an account of the revival to Mr. Wesley, from whom he received the following reply: "You have great reason to praise God for His late glorious work at and near Newry, and I make no doubt but it will continue, yea, and increase, if the subjects of it continue to walk humbly and closely with God. Exhort all our brethren steadily to wait upon God in the appointed means of fasting and prayer; the former of which has been almost universally neglected by the Methodists, both in England and Ireland; but it is a true remark of Kempis: 'The more thou deniest thyself, the more thou wilt grow in grace.'" *

As the people of Newry prayed for and expected a gracious visitation at the December quarterly meeting, they were not disappointed. Amongst others, one who had been in Society for more than thirty years was enabled to rejoice in God his Saviour. A short time before the Lord visited him in mercy, one of the leaders said it was impressed on his mind that if they would all pray for that brother, the Lord would grant their request. They then united in earnest supplications until prayer was turned into praise. The watch-night was also a blessed season. During these two services twenty souls at least were converted.† Within about six months, the numbers in the Newry Society were more than trebled. For a time the Divine Spirit, "like mighty winds or torrents fierce," defied all opposition; the most profligate persons, who came to the chapel, literally fell down, and owned that God was with His people; and in the same religious assembly, Methodists and Episcopalians, Presbyterians and even Roman Catholics, joyfully proclaimed the great things which God had done for their souls. Very little, if any wildness appeared in this gracious work, which soon spread to several parts

* Wesley's Works, xiii., p. 119.

† *Arminian Magazine*, 1791, pp. 413-16.

of the surrounding country. Amongst the many converted was Mr. Robert Walker, who for no less than three-score years, in Newry, in Dublin, and then in Athlone, witnessed a good confession, giving generously to support the cause of God, and labouring with much success as a leader and local preacher.*

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1850, p. 186.

CHAPTER III.

1791.

AT the Irish Conference in 1790, Messrs. Charles Boon, James Lyons, jun., and Andrew Hamilton, jun., were appointed to Bandon, but at the subsequent meeting in England, a change was made, Messrs. William West and John Woodrow being sent with Mr. Hamilton. On this circuit Miss Cambridge had been for years actively engaged in work for Christ; but now her sphere of Christian usefulness was greatly enlarged by holding in various parts of the town meetings at which she prayed and occasionally exhorted. These were so much owned of God, that she was invited to Kinsale, Youghal, Cappoquin, and other places, where similar services were held. In many instances the Divine blessing attended her efforts, and large numbers were led to renounce their evil ways, and flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel. Opposition, however, soon arose, not alone from an ungodly world, but also from Christian friends. Many of the Methodists, including some of the preachers, pronounced her public addresses irregular, and such as ought not to be tolerated in the Christian Church. She therefore wrote to Mr. Wesley for his advice, and received the following reply, written a little more than a month previous to his death:

“I received your letter an hour ago. I thank you for writing so largely and so freely; do so always to me as your friend, as one that loves you well. Mr. Blair has the glory of God at heart, and so have his fellow-labourers. Give them all honour, and obey them in all things, as far as conscience permits. But it will not permit you to be silent when God commands you to speak; yet I would have you give as little offence as possible; and therefore would advise you not to speak at any place where a preacher is peaking near you at the same time, lest you should draw away

his hearers. Also avoid the first appearance of pride or magnifying yourself. If you want books, or anything, let me know; I have your happiness much at heart."

This letter greatly encouraged Miss Cambridge, and the prudent advice which it contained she carefully followed to the end of life. But even it would have failed to sustain her in the position she took had she not possessed the deep conviction of a Divine call, confirmed by numerous seals to her ministry, so that she could not dare to act otherwise.

In appearance Miss Cambridge was remarkably neat and plain, resembling in this respect members of the Society of Friends. In social intercourse, she assumed none of that superiority to which her talents and usefulness might have entitled her, but was ever willing to sit at the feet of any, through whom she might obtain an increase of knowledge or grace. Her conversation was marked by cheerful gravity, and a strict observance of the apostolic precept: "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." She abhorred that bane of social life, evil speaking, while it was to her a source of special satisfaction to be able to reconcile those who had become estranged. Her favourite theme was the goodness of God, which she gratefully acknowledged, urging on others to "taste and see that the Lord is gracious." She possessed some of the most essential requisites for public speaking. Her accent was pleasing, her enunciation clear and distinct, and her manner free from affectation and dogmatism.

"She was humble, kind, forgiving, meek,
Easy to be entreated, gracious, mild;
And, with all patience and affection, taught,
Rebuked, persuaded, solaced, counsell'd, warn'd
In fervent style and manner. All
Saw in her face contentment, in her life
The path to glory and perpetual joy."

Nor did she neglect carefully to water the good seed thus sown in the hearts of her hearers. When she had the opportunity of personal intercourse, she directed their steps, and watched over their progress in the Divine life; and with many of them, when removed to a distance, she maintained a correspondence which proved most profitable.

Meanwhile in Dublin, Adam Clarke was passing through severe affliction. After a protracted sickness his eldest child was taken home to the Eden above, while he himself became dangerously ill—in fact it was reported in England that he was dead, and one of the itinerants actually preached his funeral sermon! To Mrs. Clarke, on January the 18th, Wesley wrote as follows:—“I hope before this time God has heard our prayers, and given brother Clarke a little more ease. I should suspect a dropsy on the brain, which though formerly judged incurable, has lately been cured by the successful treatment of Dr. W. Brother Clarke and you have large proof that whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. He knoweth the way wherein you go. When you have been tried you shall come forth as gold. I wonder at the folly of Mr. Vincent; surely he is a very weak man. But I shall judge better when you have given me his performance.”*

Mr. Clarke now slowly recovered, and the venerable evangelist on February the 9th, wrote thus to him:—“You have great reason to bless God for giving you strength according to your day. He has indeed supported you in a wonderful manner under these complicated afflictions. You may well say, ‘I will put my trust in Thee, as long as I live.’ I will desire Dr. Whitehead to consider your case, and give you his thoughts upon it. I am not afraid of your doing too little, but too much. I am in imminent danger of this. Do a little at a time, that you may do the more. My love to sisters Cookman and Boyle; but it is a doubt with me, whether I shall cross the seas any more. What preacher was it who first omitted meeting the select Society? I wonder it did not destroy the work! You have done right in setting up the Strangers’ Friend Society. It is an excellent institution.”†

Amongst those converted to God through the labours of Mr. Clarke, in Dublin, the names of two should be mentioned; one was a young man, named William Kent, who subsequently became an efficient and useful leader and local preacher, until his death in 1837. The other was a Turkish merchant, called Ibrahim Ben Ali, who, arriving in the city, and knowing but little English, inquired for anyone who understood either Arabic or Spanish. He was a native of Constantinople, near to which his father, a

* Life of Mrs. Clarke, p. 86.

† Wesley’s Works, xiii., p. 105.

strict Mahometan, resided on a large estate. Among the many slaves he possessed were several Spaniards, who frequently spoke to Ibrahim of the God of the Christians, and of Jesus Christ, telling him that Mahomet was a false prophet and his teaching untrue. After numerous remarkable vicissitudes, at length this young man visited Ireland, and thus became acquainted with Mr. Clarke, and was instructed by him more fully in the way of salvation. In the course of a few months, at his own earnest request, he was admitted to the Sacrament of baptism, which was administered in Whitefriar street chapel by Mr. Rutherford, while Mr. Clarke translated the service into Spanish. This Christian Turk continued to maintain a consistent character until his death.

But we must pass from Ireland to notice an event which caused a thrill through the entire Methodist Connexion. The venerable Wesley was now drawing near the close of his hallowed and blessed career. He preached for the last time, from "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near," on February the 23rd—seven days before his death. He had often prayed that he might not live to be useless, and thus his desire was fulfilled. Having finished his course with joy, and the ministry which we had received from the Lord Jesus, he calmly waited his end, praising God for His goodness, and expressing unshaken confidence in His continued presence and blessing. The death of this devoted evangelist was like "the peaceful setting of a glorious sun, undisturbed by the slightest wind, and undimmed by the smallest intervening cloud." On Wednesday morning, March the 2nd, as Joseph Bradford said, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and this heir of glory shall come in," the spirit of Wesley entered in triumph the New Jerusalem.

The death of such a man was no common loss, and was deeply felt by the whole Connexion. Thousands of the people with all their ministers went into mourning, and most of the preaching houses were draped with black; a brief account of his last moments was printed and sent to all the preachers; and in every chapel a funeral sermon was preached. Among the rest in City road, Dr. Whitehead was the preacher, and his discourse being highly esteemed, was shortly afterwards published. Mr. Clarke sent a copy of this sermon to the learned Dr. Thomas Barnard, Bishop

of Killaloe, who replied as follows:—"I received the favour of your letter, and the excellent sermon that accompanied it, on the death of Mr. Wesley, which I have perused with serious attention and uncommon satisfaction. It contains a true and not exaggerated encomium on that faithful and indefatigable servant of God, who is now at rest from his labours, and (what is of more consequence to those who read it) an intelligible and judicious *απολογία* for the doctrine that he taught, which is set forth in the clearest terms, and with a simplicity of style, even beyond that of Mr. Wesley himself; without the smallest tincture of (reprehensible) enthusiasm, erroneous judgment, or heterodox opinion. He has plainly expounded the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; and I hope and believe that the dispersion of this little tract may do much good: as the sublimest truths of Christianity are there reduced *ad captum vulgi*, and at the same time proved to the learned to be none other than such as have been always held and professed in the Christian Church from the time of the apostles till now, however individuals may have lost sight of them."* This for that period, and from a bishop, is a noble tribute to the devoted labours and Scriptural teaching of the founder of Methodism.

In Newry as Mr. McDonald preached a funeral sermon on this mournful occasion a profound impression was made, the whole congregation being deeply affected. Amongst those present was a young man named Alexander Sturgeon, who had been strongly prejudiced against Methodism; but his views were completely changed, he began to attend the services regularly, and thus was led to rejoice in the privileges realized by the children of God. Having identified himself with the Society, his parents became alarmed, and fearing the religious malady might spread among their children, determined, if possible, to check its progress. They asked him how he could serve God, and at the same time give them so much uneasiness. He replied by appealing to them if he was not more attentive to their wishes since his conversion than before, in every matter, except this in which conscience was concerned. But they were not satisfied, and therefore called to their aid the clergyman of the parish, for whom they entertained

* Life of Adam Clarke, i., p. 281.

the highest respect; and Alexander promised if he could prove from the Bible that the Methodists were in error he would hear them no more. The minister endeavoured to persuade the young man that attending the services of the Church, and living a sober life, would answer every necessary purpose, and attached great importance to the use of the Book of Common Prayer. Alexander, however, objected to some parts of it, especially the absolution in the Visitation of the Sick, and pressed for a Scripture proof of its authority. Unable to supply one, the clergyman gave up the point, saying, "Blot the passage from the book!" This closed the discussion, and not only did young Sturgeon receive no further trouble, but soon afterwards his parents invited the preachers to their house, which led to every member of the family being brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. Both Alexander and his brother William subsequently entered the itinerancy.

In a letter to Mr. Bradford, dated April the 5th, Mr. McDonald says: "At our last quarterly meeting, the people were as much in earnest as ever, and about ten were brought out of the prison-house of sin, and enabled to praise a sin-pardoning God. Both at the love-feast and watch-night, the arm of the Lord was revealed, and believers rejoiced with joy unspeakable. There have been upwards of one hundred conversions in this town since Conference, and there is a prospect of the work going forward. Glory be to God for reviving His work here! May He revive it everywhere, till Satan's kingdom be entirely destroyed."*

Charles Mayne at this time came to reside in Newry, where he at once identified himself with the Society; and soon afterwards he and John Boyd were appointed to meet classes. The work greatly prospered, especially in the town, where the Sabbath evenings were generally closed with meetings for prayer, conducted by the leaders, assisted by some pious young men. Many attended these services who would not go to the chapel. Two instances of good done may be mentioned. One was that of a young man, respectably connected and of an exceedingly nervous temperament, who was brought to a saving knowledge of God; the change that took place not only in his conduct but in his constitution was remarkable; and although much opposed by his

* *Arminian Magazine*, 1791, p. 416.

parents, he held fast his integrity. The other instance was that of the daughter of a pious widow, a young lady much given to the fashionable amusements of the world; through the solemn and earnest appeal addressed to her, shortly after her return from the theatre, to which she had gone against the will and remonstrance of her mother, she was convinced of sin and converted to God, and after some years died in the sure and triumphant hope of eternal life.

During the summer a young man named John Finnegan, a native of the county of Tyrone, sailed for New York. He had been converted in connection with Methodism, about four years previously, and at once identified himself with the Society in the country of his adoption. In 1795 he began to travel as a preacher, and for thirty-two years rendered good service to the cause. He is described as a quaint, eccentric, and determined man, who bravely bore the trials and toils of the itinerancy, not only during the novelty of a first experience but through the tests of a long life.*

There were many prophecies; that Methodism would not outlive Wesley, or that its character would be greatly if not completely changed; but these dismal anticipations were far from realized. For a time nothing was heard but the voice of lamentation; then, when the first pang of grief was assuaged, wise men began to look into the future, and the leading ministers in the Connexion proceeded to consider the best means of filling the great gap, and preserving the Societies intact. During his life the founder of Methodism governed both the preachers and the Societies; but at the same time he invited each year such persons as he chose to meet and advise him with regard to the interests of the work. Gradually, however, without yielding his legal right, as the ministers grew older and more experienced they were taken more fully into confidence, and permitted to exercise greater influence on legislation, until at length nearly every decision arrived at, as to the discipline and operations of the Societies, was practically the act of either the British or the Irish Conference. By the Deed Poll it was declared what persons were members of the Conference, and how its succession and

* Strong's Memorial of Methodism, p. 389.

identity were to be continued, and provision was made for the transaction of the business arising in connection with the work in Ireland. Thus by the death of Wesley the highest courts in Methodism received no rude or violent shock. However, as during the intervals between their yearly assemblies he watched over the Societies with unwearied assiduity, giving advice and directions whenever needed, and in cases of delinquency faithfully administering discipline, by his removal this important and necessary authority passed into the hands of the Conference, without any provision for its exercise except at the annual meetings. Almost immediately after his death, circumstances arose which made this lack most apparent. As it was not in accordance with the Deed Poll, and the Connexion was not prepared to accept the appointment of any minister as a successor to Mr. Wesley, it was proposed by Mr. Thompson, with the concurrence of a number of the leading ministers, and embodied in a printed circular, that the preachers should consult with their brethren as to the persons who should attend the first Conference, and also as to what form or mode of government it would be most desirable to adopt. On the latter point it was suggested that vacancies in the Legal Hundred should be filled up by seniority; the president, the secretary, and the delegate to Ireland should each be appointed from year to year; and the Connexion should be divided into districts, each composed of a group of circuits under the supervision of a chairman, the ministers of which having authority to act as a committee of Conference in their several localities during the intervals of its assemblies. Meetings for consultation on these points were held by the preachers in different parts of England, while Adam Clarke and other Irish brethren met in Dublin, and expressed their approval of the above proposals.

Meanwhile the time appointed for holding the Irish Conference approached; but no provision had been made for its meeting by the appointment of a delegate. Dr. Coke, who had presided in the absence and by the appointment of Wesley, prepared to attend. He was however, strongly advised not to go; and that advice was given from a regard to his own feelings. Well aware of the prejudice which prevailed as to the doctor's supposed ambition to succeed Wesley, his friends apprehended that some

token of that prejudice would give itself expression in a manner that might pain him. He wavered for a time, but at length resolved to be present.

The preachers assembled in Dublin on Friday, July the 1st, but in the absence of a regularly appointed delegate could not hold a Conference; and therefore resolved themselves into a committee, and in order to give Dr. Coke a plain intimation, once for all, that however highly they esteemed and loved him, they could not accept any minister as occupying the exalted position, long sustained by the venerated Wesley, elected as their chairman John Crook, who presided with much judgment and dignity. The usual business was gone through, seven preachers being received on trial; nothing was printed but the stations, and all was referred for confirmation to the British Conference, which met on July the 26th.

The first act of the preachers in England on meeting, was to elect as president Mr. Thompson, whose character, talents, and ministerial life rendered him in every way worthy of the high distinction thus conferred. It was agreed unanimously that all the preachers in full connexion should enjoy every privilege that the Legal Hundred possessed, agreeable to Mr. Wesley's request: and, as the most substantial proof of their veneration for his memory, they would endeavour, "with great humility and diffidence, to follow and imitate him in doctrine, discipline, and life." To supply the lack of Mr. Wesley's general superintendence, the plan proposed by the President of dividing the country into different parts was adopted; it being arranged that there should be the following six districts in Ireland;—Dublin, Cork, Athlone, Clones, Londonderry, and Charlemont. In reply to the inquiry, "Is it necessary to enter into any engagements in respect to our future plan of economy?" it was answered, "We engage to follow strictly the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death." The appointment of Dr. Coke to hold the ensuing Irish Conference led to the following resolution: "No letters of complaint, or on circuit business, shall be written to England on account of this appointment. The committees of the districts shall determine all appeals whatsoever during the intervals of the Conference; and therefore all applications on Society business during the said intervals, which cannot be determined by the Assistants of

the circuits, shall be made to the Committee only." It was also arranged that the Committee of each district in Ireland should send one of their body to meet the Delegate, two days before the meeting of the Conference, to draw up a plan for stationing the preachers. This was the origin of the Stationing Committee. Previous to this period all the financial deficiencies in Ireland had been cheerfully paid by the British Conference, and that it was resolved to continue this help is evident. "Are any directions necessary concerning the distribution of the Yearly Collection?" it was asked, and the reply given was: "It shall be distributed in the following manner—(1) The demands of Scotland; (2) the demands of Ireland; (3) those of Wales; (4) those of France (5) those of the poorer circuits in England; and lastly, the demands of all the remaining circuits, according to the judgment of the Committee."

The Methodists, while thus arranging their general economy, did not confine their attention to mere organization in order to perpetuate the hallowed enterprise so long and successfully carried on by their venerated father; they gave themselves afresh to earnest, self-denying work in leading sinners to the Saviour; and the Lord crowned their efforts with His abundant blessing. Very soon after Wesley had rested from his labours, the Spirit of the Lord descended on another, who proved in time one of the most successful and illustrious evangelists who ever proclaimed Christ crucified to perishing sinners.

Gideon Ouseley, a member of a respectable and distinguished family, was now twenty-nine years of age, and resided at Dunmore, in the county of Galway. Having been intended for the Church, he received, for the time and place, a liberal education. Living in uninterrupted familiarity with bog and cabin, with mountain road and secluded lake; with frieze coats, shoeless feet, and beggars' wallets; with the Irish tongue, or English spoken with a glorious brogue; with two or three little fields for a farm, and for a table the potato basket set on an iron pot; with the wake and the "berrin," the weddings and the stations, the village market, the rollicking fair, the hurling matches, the patrons, and the rows which made up the sum of peasant life, there was laid the basis of that quick sympathy between him and the common people, which subsequently proved the greatest among the

numerous natural elements of his power. He was thus prepared to stand close home upon the affections of the people for whom he was to live, so that he could get into their hearts before one differently trained could seize the tips of their fingers. With a powerful frame, a dreadnought courage, and a ready wit, he had been the leader of a band of wild and dissolute youths, in company with some of whom, he met with an accident by which he at once lost the sight of his right eye, and was led to serious thought and concern about entering on a better life.

During the spring of this year a detachment of the Royal Irish Dragoons was quartered in Dunmore; and no sooner had they arrived than some of their number, headed by the quartermaster, Mr. Robinet, engaged a public room in which to hold meetings. That dragoons should resort to a public house was nothing new, but that they should assemble to pray, sing hymns, and read the Bible was something strange, and excited no little interest in the town. The clergy of both church and chapel combined to lead the laugh against the praying soldiers. Some affirmed that Mr. Robinet and his band were Methodists; but the bulk of the people were little the wiser of this information. The soldiers were open enough, and invited the public freely to attend their meetings. Some did respond, and the plain words of the quartermaster told upon both the heart and life of his hearers.

Mr. Ouseley, of course, heard the talk, shared in the general wonder and curiosity, and resolved to go and judge for himself. He attended again and again, and a new light dawned on his mind, which revealed fresh views of himself, so that his sins gradually appeared in the odious light of offences against a good and holy God. Meanwhile the quartermaster had invited the preachers to the town; and on the second visit of Mr. David Gordon, a deep and lasting impression for good was made on the mind of Mr. Ouseley, who resolved to abandon all his evil practices and enter upon a new and godly life. One Sunday morning soon afterwards, when in his own house, seeking the Saviour, he was enabled to behold the Lamb of God as taking away his sins, and felt the long sought peace had been bestowed at last. He could say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour;" for a new song had been put in his mouth, which all along the storm-beaten path he travelled

to his grave, was sung and sung anew. A few months subsequently, he received a wonderful baptism of the Spirit in sanctifying power, and from that time forth wherever he went he spoke of the things of God, telling of a kingdom, not in the golden clouds of a distant world, but within the heart—a kingdom of “righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”*

At this period a gentleman who resided at Ballyroan had a son a surgeon in the army, who had been brought to the saving knowledge of God through the labours of the Methodists, and he repeatedly requested his father to go and hear the preachers, and if possible bring them to his house. Mr. Condry was then stationed on the Athlone circuit, and on his ordinary round came to the Queen’s county, where he made a considerable stir by a public controversy with some priests. He was then invited by the above gentleman to his house, where he preached on Ezekiel’s vision of the dry bones. Amongst those present was a Mrs. Doxey, who was so impressed with what she saw and heard, and especially with the preacher’s conversation, that she requested him to visit her house, where she invited a number of friends to meet him, and all were much gratified with his society. Before separating he read a chapter in the Bible, made some comments on it, and then offered a prayer, which the family were so pleased with that they, supposing he had repeated it from memory, requested a copy of it. They also invited him to return at the end of a month, when next in the neighbourhood. In the meantime, however, his colleague, Mr. William Johnson, came, and both Mr. and Mrs. Doxey went to hear him. His subject was the Second Coming of Christ, and his application of it close and powerful. Mr. Doxey was deeply affected; and when the service concluded, took the preacher by the hand, invited him to his house, and offered him a large parlour to preach in. Thus Methodism was introduced into this neighbourhood, and before the following Conference, Mr. Condry formed a class of which both Mr. and Mrs. Doxey were members.†

Mr. Graham was put down this year as a third preacher on the Limerick circuit; but laboured especially in the country parts of the counties of Kerry and Cork, which involved very long journeys.

* Arthur’s Life of Onseley, pp. 1-47.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1823, pp. 56-57.

The following circumstance, however, in God's good providence, to some extent greatly relieved this difficulty. A lady, who lived about midway between Killarney and Kanturk, happened to visit a family in Kerry, that entertained Mr. Graham on a day when he was there. She told him that her husband and herself were very much alarmed, a few days previously, by the following occurrence. The servant maid had laid the cloth for dinner, and on returning to the room, to her horror, found it saturated with blood. She then called the family, who were equally terrified, considering it as foreshadowing some coming evil. Mr. Graham said it might be intended as a warning, and that they should humble themselves before the Lord, and pray that He would either avert the dreaded calamity, or sanctify it to them. She said they would do so, and requested him to call at her house when passing. This was just what he wanted,—a stopping place to break the long journey,—and his first visit resulted in the conversion of the members of this interesting family.

In Mr. Graham's labours in the county of Cork, his success was even more remarkable than in Kerry. The first place he visited was Newmarket, where the hotel keeper, a nominal Roman Catholic, attended the service, expressed himself much pleased, and there was reason to believe he received the truth in the love thereof. Mr. Graham then proceeded to Kanturk, where he found "a few well-disposed people," whom he formed into a class, and believed they would hold fast whereunto they had attained.

Thence he went to Mallow, of the people of which he says, they were proverbial for drunkenness, cock-fighting, and all manner of dissipation. Several persons attempted to discourage him from visiting this town, but he replied, "The deeper sunk, the greater danger, and the more need of my message." On arriving he went to the inn, and the landlord, a nominal Protestant, on ascertaining that his guest was a Methodist, said to him, "If you convert me, you may convert the devil." Yet the missionary had reason, before he left the town, to hope for even this man. With the landlady, however, it was different; she said, "We have a religion of our own here; and as for your repentance, and faith, and pardon, we don't want such things; we have our own clergy!" Mr. Graham obtained a room for hire, spent two

nights in the town, had good congregations, and even formed a society of twenty-five persons.

Whether it was during this or a subsequent visit to the town the following circumstance took place is not quite clear. On one occasion, however, the missionary preached under the window of a room in which the members of a Freemason lodge were assembled. They heard the sound of the preacher's voice distinctly, listened with attention, and became much interested in the service. At its close they sent a message to request him to come to their lodge. "He accordingly," says Mr. Olliffe, "ascended the ladder, laid justice to the rule and righteousness to the plummet, and squared off at least one living stone for our spiritual building; and by so doing made a sun home for our ministers for many years, where the whole family became partakers of the grace of eternal life." Mr. Graham regularly visited Mallow after this, and at the end of the year left one hundred and fifty members in the town. Of these, he says, "A more loving people for a young society could hardly be found."

The next place visited was Doneraile, where there was a great stir; and soon the news that a wonderful missionary had come to the town, was carried to Viscount Doneraile, who sent for his steward, inquired about the stranger, and when told that he came to reform the people, replied, "It would be well, if it could be done." Graham opened his commission, and not in vain, for before leaving he formed a society of seventeen members, not including many who gave evidence that they did not hear in vain, so that a great moral change was apparent. Thus in labours more abundant did this veteran of the Cross spend the second year of his ministry in the moral wilds and wastes of Kerry and Cork. Before he left he could pass through every part of the country without the slightest annoyance, being respected and beloved alike by rich and poor: for the Lord turned the barren wilderness into a fruitful field, and opened rivers in high places and springs in the valleys.

On the Enniskillen circuit, some encouraging openings for preaching the Gospel were obtained, which resulted in much good. One of these was at Moybane. During a blessed revival seven years previously, at a service in the house of Richardson Little, Longfield, the word preached was applied with saving power

to the heart of a young woman, named Jane Linn, so that she was enabled to cast her guilty spirit on a faithful and merciful God. On returning home she told what the Lord had done for her soul to her mother, who thus was led to seek until she found the same blessing. Jane became a steady member of the Society, and on her marriage to Mr. William Herbert of Moybane, invited the preachers at once to their house, where a class was soon formed. Subsequently her husband, and then three of their sons became Irish Methodist preachers, a fourth entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, and a fifth was an acceptable leader and local preacher. For nearly half a century this devoted woman was truly "a mother in Israel."*

Another opening for Methodism was obtained in the town of Monaghan. About two years previously, a young man named James Dougan, a native of the place, went to reside in Dublin; and while there, one Sabbath evening, as he and some of his gay and thoughtless companions walked down Whitefriar street, they heard singing in the Methodist chapel, and one of them proposed that they should go in and have some sport. While, however, the preacher held forth the word of life, it was applied by the Spirit to the conscience of young Dougan, who was thus led to seek the Lord "with strong crying and tears," until he found Him to the joy of his heart. After some time he returned to Monaghan, where his first work was to secure a school room as a place in which to worship God; and then he invited one of the preachers in Clones to the town. A society was soon formed, consisting of Dougan and five others; to meet whom a leader came from the head of the circuit, a distance of about thirteen miles, until Dougan was considered qualified to take the position himself, an office which he sustained with zeal and fidelity for nearly half a century. He lived in communion with God, his life was consistent, and his last days were full of consolation and triumph.†

A third opening was at Drumcree. Mr. Shillington having married Miss Averell, and taken up house, invited the preachers to the neighbourhood once a month; and it was arranged that such as desired to flee from the wrath to come should meet him each

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1840, pp. 347-57.

† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1842, p. 331.

Sunday morning. They did not assemble often until the Lord so blessed the means that two were brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. A class was then formed consisting of twelve members. One of these was a servant maid, named Mary M'Keown, a miracle of grace. Having been brought up a Romanist, she was strongly prejudiced against all who did not belong to her own church; but while Mr. James Bell led in family worship one morning, the Lord touched her heart. She felt the fire of Divine love kindled in her soul, accompanied by a joy that was inexpressible. But soon the enemy persuaded her that it was a bewitchery cast on her by the preacher, and for some time she was unwilling to join as heretofore with the family in prayer. She also kept secret the working of her mind, until one evening as Mr. Shillington reasoned with her and explained the nature of the Spirit's operations, she frankly told him all. As her mind was now in darkness through unbelief, she sought the Lord with full determination not to rest until she found Him. After this she joined the class, and soon obtained peace and joy through believing. Her friends, having heard of the profession she made, thought she had gone mad, and contemplated tying her with cords; but the Lord delivered her, and enabled her to rejoice in His salvation. She continued for forty years a faithful servant in the family, and a devoted Christian. Her end was peace.

At this period Methodism was introduced into Moira. One Sunday the people had just returned from the noon services, and while careful mistresses were looking after the preliminaries of the approaching repast, and younger members of the households were lolling over books, or idly gazing out of the windows, a stranger rode up to the principal inn, dismounted, gave his horse in charge to the usual attendant, unstrapped a huge pair of saddle-bags, and flinging them over his arm, entered the hotel. All this was observed in the house adjoining by some juvenile loungers, who found diversion in looking at the new comer, and forming conjectures as to whom he was and what brought him there. His appearance was to them unique; and then, those mysterious saddle-bags! What could be in them? He seemed specially careful of them. So off they ran, and reported the matter to their father, who immediately observed, it was probably a Methodist preacher, and as the stranger might not have

ordered a dinner, he should wish to ask him to come in and share theirs. "My dear," said he, addressing his wife, "have you any objection?" To this she replied with right hospitable warmth, and in half-an-hour afterwards the master and mistress of the mansion, two grown-up daughters, a son, and some five or six junior members of the family sat around the dinner-table, with Mr. John Grace, the Methodist preacher, occupying the most honourable place, beside the lady of the house. From this day the itinerants received a cordial welcome from the family of Mr. Lutton, and Methodism has had a firm footing in the town.*

The Society in Donaghadee, at this time, was very feeble, consisting of a few persons in exceedingly humble circumstances, without any place of meeting. The town had been visited by the preachers from Belfast, who, either through discouragements in the place, or invitations from more hopeful fields, had ceased to come to the neighbourhood. But before they left, a young woman named Mary Carey was convinced of sin through their ministry, and led to seek the Lord with a lowly, penitent, and obedient heart. Like another weeping Mary, she sought by faith, and found access to Him who has said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." No sooner did she realize a conscious sense of sins forgiven than she joined the little band of Methodists. This step brought on her the censure of her neighbours, who looked upon the members of the Society as apostates from the faith of their fathers; and even her parents were influenced by the common prejudice, and opposed her. However, "by patient continuance in well doing," she overcame much opposition, and was permitted to act according to her convictions. Feeling her need of the social means of grace, she was accustomed to go four miles to attend Society meetings, and even walked fourteen to be present at love-feasts. Not satisfied, however, that the town should be neglected, she went on foot to Belfast, and with tears besought the preachers to return; and they consented. The place of meeting at first was a corn-kiln; but Mary so influenced her parents that they invited the servants of God to their house, and the barn was fitted up for the services. The word preached was accompanied with power from on high,

* Memorials of a Consecrated Life, p. 6.

several were converted, and the work prospered. Mary had now many companions with whom she enjoyed sweet fellowship, and by whom she was much beloved. Persevering in work for Christ, she collected a number of neglected children in the barn, each Lord's day, and taught them the Scriptures. This was the first Sunday school in that locality.*

Mr. Barber, who was this year stationed on the Downpatrick circuit, seized an opportunity of preaching at Killyleagh. A large congregation attended, and the word was accompanied with remarkable power. Amongst those present were two young ladies, the Misses Wilson, who were both awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger, and cried aloud for mercy. While the preacher and some others united in fervent prayer on their behalf, the congregation looked with wonder at two respectable young women seeking mercy in humility and self-abasement of spirit; and were no less amazed when they saw them simultaneously rush into each other's arms, praising God for His pardoning love. Their house became the home of the preachers; a class with twenty members was formed; and some time subsequently Mr. Wilson became a member of the Society, gave his heart to God, and for forty years evinced the truth and reality of his profession. The family were long the chief support of Methodism in the town.† In such ways as these the Lord graciously opened to the preachers new spheres of Christian usefulness, which they promptly entered, and thus much and lasting good was effected.

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1868, p. 95.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1841, pp. 315-19.

CHAPTER IV.

1792.

REFERENCE has been made to the introduction of Methodism into France through the labours of an Irishman; a similar work was performed in Spain, by a number of soldiers, who had been connected with the Society if not converted in the Emerald Isle. In March 1792, the 46th, 51st, and 61st regiments arrived at Gibraltar from Ireland. In them there were ten or eleven persons who feared God, one of whom preached, and two exhorted. They met in a private room at first, not knowing whether they would be permitted to meet in public. On hearing the singing, people assembled about the door, and earnestly sought admission, which was granted. Fearing to incur the displeasure of the Governor, General O'Hara, the soldiers requested and obtained permission to hold their meetings. A large room was immediately secured, but it could not contain one-half of the people who desired to attend, and another apartment, about twice the size, was then taken. Many now began to be concerned about salvation, some of whom did not rest until they knew by glad experience that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins. Before the war broke out in 1793, the Society consisted of one hundred and twenty persons, and the congregations of more than double that number.

The enemy of souls, however, was not idle. Two or three gentlemen requested the Governor to put a stop to the meetings; but he replied, "Let them alone: I wish there were twenty for one of them, and we should have fewer court-martials in the garrison." Nevertheless, persecution did not cease, and all manner of evil was spoken against the godly band. This had one good effect at least: the hands of the faithful were strengthened, and their hearts much united. When the Society was well

established, the troops were scattered by the war, and thus the Methodists were reduced in number to about twenty. Yet they continued to meet regularly, there being always some one to give a word of exhortation. Again the work prospered, and the services were so well attended than in 1796 it was thought advisable to build a chapel. This was done without delay, at a cost of one hundred and twenty pounds, and free from all debt. At this period there were about fifty members, and the congregation numbered three or four hundred.*

But to return to Ireland. Gideon Ouseley was now at work for Christ. The candle was lighted, and could not be hidden either under bed or bushel. First, it had to show light to those who were in the house. The young convert sought by all means to bring his wife to the knowledge of that blessed Saviour, who had made the earth a new world to him. Gradually his prayers and efforts told upon her mind, and in about twelve months after his conversion, she became a partaker of like precious faith, happy in the Saviour who had made him happy. It was not for long that speaking of the things of God merely to his friends and acquaintances would suffice. He soon began to hear an inward voice urging him to go out into the highways and hedges, and summon the people to repentance; and this call to go forth publicly resounded louder and louder within. What could he do? He felt that he neither knew how to begin a sermon or end one; but this did not decide the question. The voice said, "Gideon, go and preach the Gospel;" but he so felt his unfitness that he pleaded, "Lord, I am a poor ignorant creature. How can I go? Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child." Then the inquiry arose, "Do you not know the disease?" "Oh yes, Lord, I do." "And do you not know the cure?" "Oh yes, glory be to Thy name, I do." "Go then and tell these two things, the disease and the cure; and never mind the rest." So at length he determined, with this knowledge, to go forth and proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. One day while his heart was full of these thoughts and feelings, the funeral of a neighbour entered the burying ground near his residence. The hour had come, forth he went, entered the sacred enclosure, and began to address the crowd. They all knew him,

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1802, pp. 323-25.

and what he had been. He had nothing to tell them but the disease and the cure, which he made known as well as he could; and thus began a course of public labour which has yielded an abundant and glorious harvest.

Opposition soon arose. The priest took alarm, and told his people not to heed the preacher, that he had lost his senses; but they replied, "If you would hear him, sir, you would find there is good sense in every word he says." Then the Episcopal clergy were aroused. The curate had been proud of his large-mindedness; he "allowed every man to go to heaven in his own way;" but this new way would never do. Although neither sober nor moral himself, he had his æsthetics of religion, and greatly resented the unseemly proceedings of Gideon. "It is bad enough," said this ecclesiastical functionary, "that he has himself embraced these new opinions, but to propagate them, and to make others as bad as himself, is intolerable." So one Sunday morning he delivered a great tirade against the Methodists, whose motives were bad, and their doctrines rank nonsense. They actually taught the people that Christ was to save them not in their sins, but from their sins; and that the Holy Spirit was, not merely a solemn name in the Creed, but a living agent, operating on the hearts of ordinary people. All this he denounced with severity and anger. When the preacher closed, Gideon stood up in his pew, and affectionately but firmly urged that the doctrines denounced were exactly those of the Bible, and indeed those of the liturgy, which the clergyman had just read, citing the words as evidence. Greatly excited, the curate cried, "Do you know what you are doing, sir?" "I do, sir," replied Gideon; "I am striving to persuade you that you should not preach false doctrine, and to guard those that hear you from its effects." Little wonder that the curate replied, "Only that you are John Ouseley's son, I would do as the law empowers me—fine and confine you, sir."

One can imagine the stir made in a place like Dunmore by this event. If it had its imprudent side, it had its beneficial results. Many heard in a few words truths to which they had been utter strangers, and were induced both to listen and converse on subjects hitherto shunned. The rector came and called upon Gideon, accompanied by his own father, and both reprobated his

conduct in the severest terms. "But," said the rector, "for regard for your family, and that I believe you to be crazed or the dupe of fanatics, I would proceed against you in the Bishop's court." His father told him that he had disgraced him, and insisted that he should give up preaching, or he would disown him. Gideon quietly replied, that to give offence was no design of his, but at any risk he would obey God rather than man. Even on the point, which he would have been the last to defend when more experienced, he insisted that, however painful to his feelings, his sense of duty to God and the people would oblige him to correct misrepresentations either in church or out of it.

Gradually this servant of God extended the sphere of his efforts, pushing out to neighbouring places, and even into adjoining counties, preaching in the graveyards, streets, and wherever he could find hearers. He spoke in Irish with telling effect, winning the ear of the multitude in a way that could be done in no other language; and passed through violent persecution as if covered with a supernatural shield. His house became a home of the disciples, where the class met after the removal of the soldiers. Of the dozen members meeting in it, about one half were his own relations who had formerly opposed him. Mrs. Ouseley became a nursing mother to the little flock, and during her husband's absence on preaching excursions, she endeavoured to supply his place, by efforts to edify them.*

At this period the Society in Charlemont consisted of persons in very humble circumstances, who cheerfully contributed to the support of the cause to the best of their ability, but were not in a position to entertain strangers. Mrs. Richardson had passed to the home above, and the preachers stopped in the house of George Heather; but his wife having died, he found it inconvenient to receive the servants of Christ. The Society, therefore, were obliged to make some other arrangement, and requested one of their number, William Byers, to provide the requisite accommodation, and they would bear the expense, to which he consented. When the time of settlement came, however, he declined to receive any remuneration; but He who said, "Whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 48-57.

the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward," fulfilled His own assurance. From the time Byers received the men of God under his roof, the Lord so prospered him, that he rapidly rose to a position of wealth and influence; and during a long life remained faithful to God and to Methodism.* Such is one of a vast number of incidents of a similar kind.

There were few districts of the country in which God was pleased to bless the labours of His servants more than in and around Charlemont. There was a blessed outpouring of the Spirit, and the efforts of the preachers were greatly acknowledged in the conversion of many, the number of members on the circuit being then the largest in Ireland. Mr. Shillington, in reference to a service which he attended on May the 27th, says:—"Blessed be God, my soul was greatly refreshed this evening in a love-feast. The number of people assembled was so great that we had to go to an orchard, and not only drops, but showers of redeeming grace descended into many hearts. I was so filled with the humbling love of Jesus, that it was beyond the power of my tongue to express what I felt."†

In the following month Mr. and Mrs. Shillington were visited by their relative, the Rev. A. Averell, who having independent means and a strong desire to preach the Gospel without remuneration, had resigned his curacy. He chiefly exercised his ministry amongst a little flock that assembled on Sabbath evenings in his house at Tentower, Queen's county; but also frequently preached in other places. In the parish church of Drumcree, he had a very large congregation. "All," he says, "were serious and attentive, and many of them evidently felt the power and enjoyed the comfort of true religion." While here he was present for the first time at a class meeting, and "was greatly strengthened and comforted by the simple, heartfelt, religious experience of the people." He was also convinced "it was a blessed means of grace, eminently calculated to strengthen and comfort those who are subjects of a Divine work in their hearts;" and resolved to introduce it amongst his own people. On his return from the north, he spent two days in Dublin amongst the Methodists, "whose sweet unity, love, and zeal made it a high privilege to associate with them."

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1850, pp. 468-70.

† Memorial of T. A. Shillington; pp. 29, 30.

Carrying out his determination, Mr. Averell formed a class in his own house on July the 1st, when eighteen persons gave in their names; and in the course of a month it was divided into three larger ones, which he met in different places, and the good which resulted astonished him. There was a great influx of people, who had been utter strangers to religion, and abandoned to sin and folly, but now gave up their evil ways and sought the pardoning mercy of God. Three months later, he preached at Maryborough, which was the first time he conducted a Methodist service. Thus he was gradually prepared for a much wider sphere of Christian usefulness.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lanktree, having occasion to visit the metropolis, met with a Mrs. Shepherd, whose husband had recently died under sadly impressive circumstances, which aroused her to deep concern for her eternal welfare. She was convinced of sin, but knew not the only means of salvation. Mr. Lanktree found great liberty in speaking to her of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and the word was applied with power to her heart. In a short time she joined the Society, and ultimately became the leader of two classes, and “a mother in Israel.”

On July the 6th the Conference met in Dublin, with Dr. Coke as president, and Mr. Crook, secretary. Eight young men were received on trial, including Matthew Tobias of Charlemont, Samuel Alcorn, Robert Banks, and James Stuart. The number of members reported was fifteen thousand and eighteen, being an increase of eight hundred and sixty on the previous year. The yearly collection, which amounted to £148 5s. 3d. was expended in supplying—(1) the deficiencies in the salaries of the preachers; (2) the deficiencies in the salaries of the wives of the preachers; (3) the deficiencies in the allowances made to the children; (4) preachers' sick families; (5) various contingencies; and instructions were given that application should be made to the British Conference to make up the sums necessary for the above purposes.

The subject of the ordination of the preachers, and the administration of the Sacraments was discussed; and it being considered that any attempt in the then state of the work to make a change would do injury, it was resolved, unanimously, to abide by the old Methodist plan, as it stood at the death of Wesley, until circumstances should render a change necessary.

Arrangements were made for securing a shop in Dublin, to be supplied with books for sale, including certain specified works to be printed in the city; and the whole placed under the superintendence of a committee, with Mr. Whitestone as steward. This was the commencement of the Book room.

From this year also we date the origin of the annual Addresses of the Irish to the British Conference. There was an impression on the minds of many of the preachers in England that the Irish brethren were alienated from them in affection, and had thoughts of forming themselves into an independent body. To remove this idea as far as possible, the members of the Irish Conference agreed to draw up an address to their English brethren as a token of their affection, and an expression of their views as to the relation of the two Conferences. So far from desiring any separation, they say: "Next to our union with the ever-blessed God, and the ministry of reconciliation committed to us, we esteem our union with you, as a body of preachers, our highest honour and happiness. United to you, not so much by interest as by the ties of gratitude and affection, we testify our firm determination to continue united to you for ever." At the same time they claim as their right, reasonable in itself, implied in the Deed Poll, and in no way a breach of this union, that the acts of the Irish Conference, when signed by the Delegate and Secretary, should be final. They heartily wish that the exchange of preachers should continue, but in such a way as would avoid all confusion or apparent collision. They also request not only the re-appointment of Dr. Coke as their president, but that he should be permitted to make a visit through the principal Societies of this kingdom, not to exercise any official powers, but to preach and to administer the Lord's supper in those cases in which the Assistants should judge it prudent.

To this important Address no reply apparently was sent, at least none has been preserved. At the British Conference, Dr. Coke was not appointed president in Ireland, but Mr. Mather, with power to delegate another of his brethren, should his health not admit of his discharging the duties of the office. A resolution also was passed expressly enjoining that the Lord's supper should not be administered amongst the Societies in Ireland for the ensuing year, on any consideration whatsoever.

This appears a rather arbitrary act ; but doubtless the Conference was influenced by a groundless fear of this country moving too fast in the matter of the ordinances.

But let us turn our attention from legislation to some of the triumphs for Christ won by the Irish itinerants. The Hon. and Rev. Power Le Poer Trench, son of the Earl of Clancarty, was at this time vicar of Ballinasloe, where he was favourably known as a friend to the poor, a pleasing preacher, and an efficient justice of the peace. But, though desirous to acquit himself creditably as a clergyman, he had a very vague idea of the duties of the ministry, and but an imperfect knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel. The parish church having been closed to undergo some repairs, the church services were held in the Methodist chapel, recently erected in the town. Thus the vicar and the preachers held forth the word of life alternately in the same place. The Methodist heard the Episcopalian at noon, and the clergyman in turn heard the preacher in the evening. The Hon. and Rev. gentleman in this way heard Mr. Woodrow preach on "the new birth," and said after the service, "If all the Methodist preachers can preach like that good man, it is not surprising that the whole world follows them." He also heard Mr. William Smith, with much satisfaction. Persons, on whose testimony reliance could be placed, stated that the first views of spiritual religion which this distinguished clergyman received, were through the ministry of the Methodist preachers, and to his honour, be it said, that he ceased not to entertain for them feelings of respect, and to acknowledge them as useful ministers of the Gospel.

In 1802, he was appointed Bishop of Waterford and Lismore ; in 1810, he was advanced to the see of Elphin ; and in 1819, he became Archbishop of Tuam. When appointed a bishop he applied himself with much energy to the discharge of his episcopal functions ; diligently visited his diocese ; found his way into regions which no Protestant prelate had ever before explored ; kept a watchful eye on careless incumbents ; and introduced various regulations calculated to promote good order and pastoral circumspection. When Bishop of Elphin, during a visitation in Castlereagh, a novel scene took place, which afforded occasion of chagrin to some, gratification to others, and surprise to all ; but it was characteristic of the Christian liberality of the noble prelate.

"Mr. Blundell," said he, "have you any Methodists in your parish?" "Yes, my lord," replied the clergyman, "but Hipwell, my clerk, knows more about them than I do." Then turning to the clerk, the bishop inquired, "Are you a Methodist?" "Yes, my lord," answered Hipwell, "I am." "Have you a large Society?" "Not very large, my lord." "Who is your leader?" "I am one myself." "Very good; do your preachers come once a fortnight?" "They do." His lordship then asked what preachers were on the circuit, and other questions which showed a familiar acquaintance with Methodism, and a deep interest in its prosperity. At a subsequent period, when Archbishop of Tuam, his Grace, by his recommendations, enabled the Wesleyan missionaries to have access to some of the leading families in the county, and thereby their field of usefulness was greatly enlarged. His Grace thus afforded gratifying evidence that he was far above that spirit of exclusiveness and narrow-mindedness, so common in the Christian world. Very few Irish prelates can be compared to him in usefulness and self-denial, in apostolic humility and in genuine nobility of character; while his personal kindness and attention to Methodist ministers should never be forgotten.

Another who did a noble work in his day, and was one of the fruits of the labours of Irish Methodism, was a gentleman named Henry Foxall, who had come to Ireland to superintend extensive ironworks, apparently in the Queen's county, and was in the habit of spending his Sabbaths in worldly pleasures with the princely family of the O'Reillys. One Lord's day, while out riding, he saw a number of people assembled in a field. Prompted by curiosity he drew near, and found they were attending a service conducted by a Methodist preacher. He listened with deep attention; the word reached his heart; he was convinced of sin, and continued for some time in great distress about his soul. At length being justified by faith, he obtained peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and gave satisfactory evidence of the depth and sincerity of his piety. Mrs. O'Reilly waited on him to know why he had absented himself from their social gatherings, and he replied, assuring her that it did not arise from any want of appreciation of their kindness; but that his views were so changed that he could not conscientiously employ his Sabbaths, or any part of them, as he had done. She said he

was “a mad Swaddler;” and taking up a copy of the Bible, which she saw on his table, threatened to burn it. However he was not moved. Soon afterwards he commenced to labour as a local preacher, and two years later went to America, where the Lord greatly prospered him, and he gave generously to the support of His cause. The first Methodist chapel in Washington, called “the Foundry,” was built solely at his expense; he subscribed £50 per annum to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and perpetuated his subscription by a bequest of upwards of £1,100, together with a similar amount to the Methodist Episcopal Church of America.*

At the Conference this year Messrs. Matthew Stewart and Charles Graham were appointed to the Enniskillen circuit, where they found “a praying people, and many experienced Christians.” It was impressed on the mind of each of these brethren that God would grant them a gracious revival year, and according to their faith it was done unto them. Mr. Graham attracted great crowds by his preaching, especially when he spoke in Irish, as many in Fermanagh then understood the language. There was a considerable movement amongst the Roman Catholics, and several left the Church of Rome. The priests took alarm, and strove to prevent as many as they could from listening to words “whereby they might be saved;” yet some of the greatest enemies of the truth were converted, and others so deeply impressed that they feared to speak against a work, so manifestly acknowledged of God. The brave and devoted evangelists pushed their way out to the west as far as the neighbourhood of Churchhill, where Mr. Stewart, in the house of Robert Wilson of Shean, preached the first Methodist sermon, from Acts xiii. 41. Soon afterwards James Gordon of Shean,† Simon, Noble, and John Johnston of Bohevny, and Thomas Armstrong of Bunnahone, invited the preachers to their houses, and classes were formed, some of which continue to the present day. A chapel was built in Enniskillen, in a retired part of the town, a very plain house with an earthen floor, thatched roof, and a small gallery at the end. There was an increase of upwards of eighty in the membership during the year.

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1824, pp. 505-8.

† Grandfather of Mr. Thomas Gordon of Londonderry, and the Messrs. Gordon of the Churchhill circuit.

A small chapel also was erected at Newtownstewart, which became the birthplace of many souls. Amongst the leading Methodists here at this period were John Gray of Lislip, and John Keys, leaders, and John Hunter of Ballykeel, an able local preacher—men who witnessed the truth and blessedness of religion in life and death. One of those converted was Gilly Mathewson of Clare, who for the remaining twenty-eight years of his life remained faithful to Methodism, and also laboured efficiently as a leader in the Society.

Mr. and Mrs. John Hunter brought up their children in loving attachment to Methodism. Two of their sons, John and James, were converted in youth, entered the medical profession, and eventually settled in London: the former in Bloomsbury, and the latter in Islington, both retaining their connection with the Society. James Hunter, aided by some others, succeeded in raising the first Methodist chapel in his neighbourhood. He was Society steward at Islington for many years, and lost none of his interest in his native country, having always a hospitable welcome for the Irish preachers who visited the metropolis. He continued a Methodist for more than half a century; his remains lie in the graveyard of City road chapel; and in the Liverpool road chapel, Islington, a handsome marble tablet was erected to his memory.

A young man named Thomas Maguire, son of Mr. and Mrs. Maguire, formerly of Mullalougher, but now of Dublin, was converted; at once became a member of the Society, joining the class of Mr. Dugdale, and from this time until his death—a period of fifty-two years—maintained his integrity, and evinced an unabated attachment to Methodism. He was an active and efficient member of the Strangers' Friend Society; and for forty years sustained the office of a leader with comfort and credit to himself, and satisfaction and profit to the members of his class. From his naturally retiring disposition, none but those intimately acquainted with him knew how well he was qualified for this office, for being himself taught in the school of Christ, he was able to instruct others in what their several states required.*

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1845, pp. 29-32.

CHAPTER V.

1793.

MR. BLAIR was stationed in Dublin; but, a few weeks after returning from the British Conference, his health began to decline. Being advised by his physician to try Bath waters, he went to England for that purpose; but after an unsuccessful trial of several weeks, returned in the middle of December to Dublin, where he was affectionately received by Mr. Arthur Keene, as his own son. Here his sufferings became very great. Patience, however, had its perfect work; and all his conversation was such as became a messenger of God, on the brink of eternity. With all the solemnity of a dying man he said, "I entered upon the ministry under a conviction that it was my duty to do all the good I could. I have had a zeal for the glory of God; but neither on this, nor on any thing I have done, do I rely, but solely on the merits of Christ." He then lifted up his voice and said, "How long, Lord, do Thy chariot wheels delay! Come quickly to my waiting soul." At another time he said, "It appears mysterious to me, that I should be cut off in the midst of my days, especially when I think of my dear wife and four helpless babes; but God knows why it is so, and that is enough for me. I know He stands in no need of me. I should be vain if I thought He did. I believe He made some use of me; but He can raise up thousands, and make them more useful than I have been." He lay in one position for about ten weeks, with all the meekness of a man whose heart was in heaven. At length the restlessness of death supervened, accompanied with much pain, but he rejoiced in the prospect of a speedy release. His last words were, "Let the name of the Lord be magnified. Glory be to God. Amen." On April 8th, 1793, he breathed forth his happy

spirit into His hands, who had redeemed him unto Himself with His own blood.

During the year 1793, an extensive awakening took place in the Queen's county, chiefly through the Divine blessing on the labours of the Rev. A. Averell, who preached both within and without the churches; and numbers attended his ministry, many of whom were led to seek salvation through the great atonement. In January, he for the first time attended a love-feast, which was held in Mountrath. "John Miller, a German," he says, "preached on the occasion a lively, useful, blessed sermon. It was indeed a time of refreshing; the people were full of life and power, and God Himself was the glory in the midst of them." On the following day, Mr. Averell preached for the first time at Donaghmore, "a very dark village;" yet many were present, and seemed to listen with uncommon interest.

He was asked to visit Rathdowney by the curate, who said, "I will give you credit if you convert any one here; I have been preaching in it these twenty-five years and never saw or heard of any person being thus changed." Mr. Averell forthwith commenced preaching there weekly; but, he says, it was the most trying undertaking he ever engaged in: nothing but a strong sense of duty, and a firm reliance on the protection of Omnipotence could have sustained him under the persecution he had to endure. The mob, knowing the time of his coming, always met him outside the town, and followed him through it, using the vilest and most abusive language, and pelting him with stones and filth. At length one of the worst of the rowdies, having been put under the influence of drink, was employed to knock the servant of God off his horse as he entered the town. On the arrival of Mr. Averell at the appointed place, the man was at his post, and brandishing his club, swore he would split his skull; but was providentially restrained from personal violence. Next day, this drunken scoundrel, fearing a prosecution, enlisted; his regiment was then at the seat of war, to which he was sent, and in about six weeks he was killed in battle by the stroke of a sabre, which literally split his head in two! Soon afterwards the person who instigated this unfortunate man to attack Mr. Averell, was himself shot dead in an affray in the town. These occurrences made so deep an impression on the public mind that there was

no more persecution in Rathdowney. The Gospel prevailed, sinners were converted, and a large class was formed.

On May the 24th, Mr. Averell for the first time introduced a Methodist preacher to his congregations at Durrow and Donaghmore. The people were so greatly blessed under the word preached that all their prejudices were overcome; and thenceforward the itinerant was received as a messenger of God. A week later, after preaching in Durrow, Mr. Averell and Mr. Miller held a love-feast at Abbeyleix, where was much of the presence and power of God. One of the leading Methodists in this town was Joseph Dobbs, a young man of sound judgment and uniform piety, who for about fifty years proved a faithful and laborious leader. His mother was originally a Romanist, and strongly attached to the superstitions of her Church; but through the influence of her son's devoted piety, she was led to the Saviour, and continued until the close of her protracted life faithful to Protestantism.*

The month of June was spent by Mr. Averell in an evangelistic tour through the kingdom, which he began at Mountmellick, and thence proceeded to Tullamore, Brackagh Castle, and Mullingar, preaching the word in connection with the Methodist Societies. At Castleblayney he found a poor but pious people, amongst whom he felt very happy. Next day, on his way to Armagh, it was impressed on his mind that God had something for him to do in the next house he came to. So on calling he found a number of people assembled, who had come to see a young man die. Mr. Averell asked if they had applied to the great Physician; and was told that they were poor and could not afford to pay a doctor. After observing that the Divine Physician charged no fee, he preached to them Jesus—who heals both soul and body. The visit being unexpected, the manner of the speaker unusual, and the doctrine new to the people, the scene was impressive and deeply interesting. He then asked them to unite with him in prayer, and while pleading for the lad, he had confidence to believe he would be healed. When about to resume his journey, the family insisted that he should take some refreshments; and while doing so, the sick boy asked aloud for something to eat,

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, p. 243.

which was regarded as a sure indication of his recovery—having eaten nothing for some days previously—and his mother wept aloud for joy. Mr. Averell then left amidst the blessings of the family and their neighbours, and with adoring gratitude to the gracious providence that led him to the place.

At Armagh, he preached to a large congregation, amongst whom were many who possessed the life and power of godliness. At Drumcree, he had in the church an overflowing audience, many of whom were Methodists. Next day he called to see Thomas Jones of Derryanvil, “a man rooted and grounded in love, and one who for nearly thirty years had been living in the uninterrupted sunshine of the Divine favour.” He then visited his parents at Mullan, and advised them to join the Society, to which they willingly consented. He preached not only here, but in Ballinderry church, Coagh, and at a quarterly meeting in Mr. Paul’s of Annagh, where was a large assembly and much of the power of God. On again visiting his friends at Armagh, Mr. Averell spent a very blessed Sabbath, and had much liberty in dispensing the word of life. At Clones, there were many wealthy Methodists, but some of them talked more about what they had been in religion, than what they then were. At Goshen, he was prevailed on by Mr. M’Cutcheon to remain longer than he had purposed, that he might attend the quarterly meeting in Longford. Nor did he regret having stopped, his soul was so richly feasted in hearing simple-hearted people artlessly relate the dealings of God with their souls. At Athlone there was a large congregation of both rich and poor. Thence he returned home, and thus ended the first of many similar journeys, of which more again.

On the Coleraine circuit, several persons were raised up to take the places of those sainted members of the Society who had been called home to their reward. The most prominent of these was John Galt, junior, the oldest surviving son of Mr. Charles Galt, to whom reference has been made. When a young man, he went one Sabbath evening to the ordinary service in the barracks. The preacher, probably Mr. Stephens, chose for his text, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved;” and having spoken for some time, said he would postpone the conclusion of his sermon until the following Sunday; but

when the appointed time arrived he had passed to the home above. The impression made by this solemn occurrence led young Galt to decision for God. After a season of spiritual gloom, he was enabled to realize peace and joy in believing; and from that time engaged heartily in work for Christ. He was founder of the Coleraine Sunday school, and also proved a faithful leader and most acceptable local preacher.

In Ballycastle, the work greatly prospered, a number of persons being brought into connection with the Society who were in better circumstances than the majority of Methodists at this early period. These included three families of the Hills; and Rebecca and Susan Moore, whose deep piety and well cultured minds qualified them for special usefulness. Rebecca was for many years an acceptable leader, and Susan was married to Mr. James M'Mullen. Jane M'Cambridge, afterwards wife of Mr. T. W. Doolittle, was another of these worthies. With a well stored mind, prepossessing appearance, and vivacious manner, she was a devoted Christian, and a loving faithful friend. The congregations and Society having increased, it became needful to have a preaching house, so a competent builder was found in Mr. Hill, of Hillhead, the people worked diligently, and the house was opened in the spring of this year by Mr. William Smith.

To the above Methodists should be added, Peggy M'Loughlin, who at the time of her conversion lived with her father, in an humble abode to the east of the town, and there, more willingly and cheerfully than ever, took her share in the work of the little farm. The care of the cattle lay chiefly with her, and after them she went morn and eve, with joy in her heart and songs on her lips. At length her father sickened, and his sickness so gained upon him that the hope of recovery died out of the hearts of his wife and children. All were saddened, but Peggy had a grief in which the rest did not share. She knew, for her heart told her, that the Lord had power to forgive sins and to make the contrite sinner know it, but she could not persuade her father, that he might partake of this unspeakable comfort. One Sunday when the rest of the family had gone to meeting, and Peggy was left to tend the patient, she once more introduced her favourite topic. "Oh! father, if ye only knew how glad it mak's a body; and sure the Lord can easily mak' us know when He has forgi'n us our

sins." "Hoot, lass, dinna talk to me that gate." "But sure, faither, I know it mysel, that He has forgi'n me; a feel it in my heart." "Bairn, it's no decent for ye to preten' to teach your ain faither sic things, an' me an elder in the meetin' sae lang." "But, faither dear, it's true a tell ye, an' there's mony a one bye me could tell."—"Haud yer tongue, child, haud yer tongue, a say;" and he turned his face away from her and seemed bent on going to sleep. Poor Peggy was sadly cast down, but not in despair, for she knew in whom she had believed, and was persuaded that as she had found mercy, there was hope for her father. So she rose, went out to the byre, and kneeling down between two cows besought the Lord on behalf of her parent, and vowed if she had the joy of hearing him testify to a sense of sins forgiven, she would never forget to bear testimony to the mercy of God. While thus engaged, she heard her father calling, "Peggy! Peggy, woman! Come here, come here." Hurrying into the house, she was met by his crying out earnestly—"Peggy, Peggy, kneel down, kneel down here beside me, and thank the Lord. He has forgi'n a' my sins; a know it; a feel it. Its a' true that ye tell't me." And Peggy knelt down and blessed the Lord with unfeigned lips; and never forgot her vow. She proved a woman of strong faith, great self-denial, and remarkable power in prayer, being for sixty years a member of the Society. In due time her life, pure, loving, upright, and highly respected, came to a beautifully characteristic end. One morning a kind neighbour inquiring for her welfare, she replied, "The Master is come, and calleth for me;" and soon afterwards entered His immediate and glorious presence.

Amongst the valuable and almost countless gifts of Irish Methodism to America, the following claim special notice. During this year a respectable farmer, named Matthew Simpson, of Golan, in the parish of Ardstraw, Tyrone, emigrated with his family to the United States, and settled on a farm in Bucks County, Pa. One of his sons, Matthew, at this time a youth of seventeen, and a member of the Methodist Society, subsequently became a distinguished scholar, was a member of the Senate for ten years, and a judge of the county court for seven. A second son was the father of Bishop Simpson, so illustrious for his deep piety, fervent zeal, and almost unrivalled eloquence, and who was

chiefly indebted to his uncle Matthew for his intellectual and moral training. And a daughter, Hannah, became prominent as the mother of General Grant, President of the United States.

The Conference met in Dublin on July the 5th. Mr. Mather not being able to be present, he appointed Mr. Crook to take his place as president, and Mr. Griffith was elected secretary. Now for the first time the preachers on trial were recognised as having travelled one, two, or three years respectively, and those that had travelled four were received into full connexion. John M'Arthur, of the Newtownstewart circuit, who had been called out during the year, was recognised as having travelled twelve months. Two young men were admitted on trial: James M'Kee, a native of Castleblayney, and Robert Crozier. There was about one thousand of a decrease in the membership. The chairmen of districts were elected in the Conference, the Assistant of Dublin as general superintendent of Ireland, being one of them in virtue of his position. It was resolved that no preacher, who was not in full connexion, should be chairman of a district, neither should any retain the office for two years in succession, or be re-elected chairman of the same district for three years. The Address to the British Conference, written by Mr. Jonathan Crowther, was sent by Mr. Crook, who was appointed Irish representative. In it there is a grateful acknowledgment of obligation to England both for men and money, an expression of surprise and pain at certain reports that the Irish preachers desired separation from their English brethren, and a very solemn assurance that not only did no such desire exist, but there never was a time when they more highly esteemed, or were more firmly attached to their fathers and brethren in Great Britain.

At the British Conference, the Irish Address was very cordially received; and a reply sent containing a hearty reciprocation of esteem and affection, and an earnest request that the brethren in Ireland would not allow any vague rumours to grieve their minds, but ever retain the fullest confidence in the attachment of the British Conference to them, and its desire to serve them. No doubt, on account of the satisfactory representations of Mr. Crook, Dr. Coke was not only appointed president of the ensuing Irish Conference, but authorized to visit the circuits in this country during the year. It was also resolved that

only one preacher from Ireland should attend the Conferences in England.

But to return to the labours of Christian workers in this country. During the summer, Mr. Shillington spent some time in Warrenpoint, where he met Mr. Thomas Pennington of Tanderagee. Both being much in earnest they could not remain idle, and therefore united in holding meetings, which were made a blessing to many. In connection with these services Mr. Shillington was first induced to preach, which he did with fear and trembling; and thought, as he was then a considerable distance from home, it would remain unknown. In this, however, he miscalculated; for news of the preacher and the sermon reached Drumcree before he did, and the result was that from that time he was regularly employed as a local preacher. In this department of Christian labour he displayed considerable ability and zeal, riding long distances, and enduring no small amount of toil in fulfilling his appointments and seeking new openings. A friend, speaking playfully of his readiness to engage in this work, remarked, "He had only to turn round from purchasing a load of grain, to preach a sermon." And yet preaching was no light business to him, but the result of much study and earnest prayer.

"The most important work of the Methodist revival in Ireland," says an able historian, "was its indirect influence on the Protestant Episcopalians."* However questionable may be the accuracy of this statement, in view of the large and numerous evangelical churches which have been planted and nourished by Irish Methodism, there can be no doubt that the Society has exercised a powerful influence for good on the Protestant Episcopal Church of this country. Not only have many thousands of its members been quickened into spiritual life, but a large number of ministers have been raised up, remarkable for their piety and zeal. At the period to which our attention is now directed, there were in various quarters indications of a spiritual awakening among the clergy, some of whom came to the front,† and like the little leaven, have well-nigh leavened the whole

* Lecky's Hist. of the Eighteenth Century, ii., p. 610.

† In the Life of Albert Blest there are the names of thirty Irish clergymen who in 1797 were evangelical.

lump, in making the Irish by far the most evangelical section of the Anglican Church.

In 1792, Messrs. John Walker, Walter Shirley, son of the Hon. and Rev. W. Shirley, Henry Maturin, and Thomas Kelly, son of the Right Hon. Chief Baron Kelly, received ordination. Through the friendship of the curate of St. Luke's, Dublin, these four devoted young clergymen were permitted to preach in succession each evening in the parish church. Crowded audiences attended, and the word preached was accompanied with marvellous power. The news of this movement, however, having reached the rector, he not only forbade the godly band preaching any more in his church, but had them summoned before the Archbishop, Dr. Robert Fowler, by whom they were reprov'd and excluded from all the churches in the diocese. Mr. Kelly afterwards preached in the parish church of Athy, where he was made eminently useful, and wherever he could find an open door, using every means in his power to spread the light of the glorious Gospel. In 1794, he married Miss Tighe of Rosanna, shortly afterwards settled at Blackrock, Dublin, and officiated in a chapel of ease erected there by himself, where his ministry was largely attended.

Messrs. Walker and Maturin, both Senior Fellows of Trinity College, betook themselves to the Bethesda, to the charge of which they subsequently succeeded, on the resignation of the Revs. E. Smyth and W. Mann, and here they preached with much fervour.

Mr. Graham was at this time stationed on the Enniskillen circuit with Messrs. Murphy and Bell as his colleagues. The enemy of peace endeavoured to disturb the circuit, but by the blessing of God on the courage and forbearance of Mr. Graham tranquillity was soon restored. He says, that he never saw a greater growth in grace, or the work of God more prosperous than on this circuit. Amongst others a number of young men at Ballyreagh were converted, who subsequently did an important work for Christ. These included three sons of Mr. Graham who first received the preachers in this neighbourhood—William, an excellent local preacher, James, and George; Joseph Noble, under whose roof many a soul was converted, and who with a large family emigrated to America more than fifty years ago; Mr. Hunt, and

George Coulter. These were men whose houses were homes for the preachers, and who themselves were wont to go seven, ten, or even fifteen miles to meet classes. Like their Divine Master, getting up "a great while before day," they plodded over fields, mountains, and bogs, or perchance ill-made roads, to the places where prayer was wont to be made; and they were amply rewarded in times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; they were faithful men, and feared God above many.* The increase in the membership on this circuit during this year amounted to nearly three hundred.

About the year 1785, Colonel Charles L. Fitzgerald, second son of Lady Mary Fitzgerald, encouraged a number of farmers from the north of Ireland to settle on his estate at Turlough, in the county of Mayo, and to as many as came gave leases at a reduced rent. Thus, notwithstanding much opposition, a colony of Protestants was formed in a Popish district of country. These settlers, however, were without any place of worship nearer than Castlebar, until William Rossbotham came to the neighbourhood. He had been a Methodist for many years, sustaining with zeal and acceptance the office of a leader, and at once invited the preachers to his house. The results were cheering to both the itinerants and their excellent host; a class was soon formed, and the congregations became so large that the services had to be held out of doors, where under the spreading branches of an old whitethorn tree, the preachers and old Mr. Langston of Castlebar, frequently proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. Soon the needs be for a chapel was felt; a suitable site was therefore obtained from the lord of the soil, and on application being made to his noble and saintly mother, her ladyship sent a generous subscription. Thus encouraged the work was begun and ended, so that during this year the house was opened for the worship of God, and proved a source of abundant spiritual blessing.*

Passing from the west to the north, we have an interesting glimpse of Methodism in Belfast. A young man, named William Campbell, a native of the county of Derry, came to reside in the town at this period; and, attracted by the singing, attended a Methodist prayer meeting in Long-lane. He was thus led to

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1871, pp. 145-46.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1840, pp. 369-74.

serious concern about his soul, and subsequently obtained peace with God. He then intimated his wish to join the Society to his father, who objected on the ground that the rules were so strict he feared his son would not be able to keep them. "With the help of the Lord," said William, "I will try;" and thus he entered upon a connection with Methodism, which continued as long as he lived; and the Belfast Society received into its number a young man who in the course of time became one of its most influential and devoted members. Young Campbell soon began to work for Christ, first as a member of the Strangers' Friend Society, and then as a leader. Much time was devoted by him to the discharge of the duties of his offices, and many a loathsome abode of disease and poverty visited, lest any child of affliction and want should suffer from his neglect. His education was defective, but this was more than counterbalanced by his habits of devotion and self-denial. Methodism in Belfast owes much to him who was familiarly designated "the Praying Blue-dyer."

During this year the preachers in Belfast first visited and laboured in Milltown. The strange things said of and done by the Methodists were much talked of in the neighbourhood; and with mingled feelings of fear and curiosity, several persons, including a young man from Malone, named John M'Clure, ventured to go and see for themselves. The place of meeting was a corn-kiln, and so solemn, impressive, and beautiful was the service, that the hearts of the strangers were made willing captives, and each resolved this people shall be my people and their God shall be my God. The regular and devout attendance of these young men from Malone led the preachers to desire an opening for preaching there also; and on stating their wish one evening at the close of the usual service, a farmer present offered the use of his barn. The offer was accepted, arrangements were made for a meeting, and the attendance proved very encouraging. After some time it was proposed to form a class, and forty-five persons gave in their names as candidates for membership, one of the first of whom was John M'Clure. Some of them never returned; but forty met regularly, and thus became the nucleus of a prosperous society.

Mr. Averell now took a fresh step from the rigid formality of the Church, towards the more unrestrained and aggressive agencies of Methodism, by preaching out of doors at Abbeyleix.

The weather being fine, the congregation was very large, and the Lord greatly acknowledged this effort; it was a time of breaking down and building up. Though having no claim to oratory, Mr. Averell was in many respects well fitted for such work. His love for souls, fortitude of mind, and robust constitution qualified him for this important service, and finding it productive of much good, he thenceforward frequently engaged in it.

On September the 30th, this indefatigable evangelist again set out on an excursion through the country. At Roscrea, the congregations were large, and there was much of the Divine presence. At Cloughjordan, the services were conducted in the house of Christopher Tidd, Esq., J.P., "a man of deep communion with God, whose soul was constantly feasting on the bread of life." At Mountrath, there was a large assembly, many of whom were athirst for the water of life. At Portarlington, where there was a strange blending of fashion and religion, there were some devoted Christians. At Durrow, there was a good congregation, and the Lord refreshed the souls of His people both at the public service and in the class meeting. At Eyrecourt, a large audience assembled in the market-house. At Laurencetown, God greatly acknowledged His word. At Kilchreest, Mr. Averell preached twice; and also saw two poor women, whom he designates the most holy persons, and most deeply experienced in Divine things, he had ever met. In the family of Mr. Wade, at Fairfield, he witnessed such an exemplification of the power and love of God as he had never before seen, nor indeed had any conception of, everything being made subservient to religion. At Aughrim, the quarterly meeting was held; three ministers were present, but Mr. Averell preached; and it was a day of mighty power, the Lord filling the house with His glory. In the evening Mr. John Stephenson conducted the service; Mr. Tidd exhorted; and it was truly a memorable occasion. Next day, being the Sabbath, Mr. Mitchell preached in the morning a most powerful sermon, and Mr. Averell in the evening, when the Lord again vouchsafed His presence, and made it a time of blessing. Mrs. Wade afterwards had all the Society, poor and rich, to tea; the time was occupied in religious conversation and singing hymns, and it proved a heaven on earth. When they came to conclude, the power of God so descended that prayer was lost in praise.

Three days were then spent with the Handys, at Brackagh Castle, where Mr. Averell and Mr. Tidd preached alternately morning and evening. "This numerous family," says the former, "remarkable for kindness and hospitality, have been long seeking salvation; but great wealth, with its numerous temptations, has hitherto stood in the way of their enjoying it." The services and conversations therefore, were directed to one point, to bring all the members of this circle to the foot of the Cross, and not without effect. Every member of the family and several of the servants received the truth, and realized its Divine power.

From this period until the close of the year, Mr. Averell's labours were chiefly confined to his own congregations, and those of the Rev. T. Kelly, who had temporarily removed from Athy, and left his people under the care of his brother clergyman. Although Mr. Averell was assisted by the Methodist preachers, his field of usefulness had become so extensive that he had generally to preach two or three times each day, besides meeting classes and attending to other ministerial duties. Amongst the new openings were Killenure, Cuffsborough, Grogan, Oldtown, and Rathmakelly; and in most of these he formed large and promising classes. At the December quarterly meeting in Abbeyleix, the attendance was so numerous that the chapel could not contain the people, and they were obliged to assemble in an adjoining field. Messrs. Averell and M'Cornock preached, and, though the weather was unfavourable, the people listened with as much attention, and felt as much of the power of God as if they had been comfortably seated within doors. When the open air service was over, they adjourned to the preaching house to hold the love-feast; about two hundred persons spoke, and every word appeared accompanied with Divine unction. Next day Mr. Averell preached at Killenure, to a numerous congregation that seemed athirst for the water of life, and the word was attended with power to many hearts. In the evening at Roscrea, there were many hearers, and on the Sabbath the services were continued with much blessing. At Birr Mr. Averell preached to an overflowing audience, who seemed to feel the power of the word. And at Laurencetown, a few people collected, who were exhorted to turn from their sins and seek the Lord.

CHAPTER VI.

1794.

THE opening of the year 1794 found Mr. Averell engaged in one of his evangelistic tours, of which his journal furnishes a full account, affording a record of unremitting labours in the work of the Lord, into the details of which it is unnecessary to enter. Of his untiring exertions the people around Tentower, who were the firstfruits of his ministry, and especially dear to him, had an ample share, and the Lord gave him the desire of his heart in seeing them increasing both in number and piety. But his attention was not confined to this district, for his labours were extended over a much wider area. Accordingly we find him carrying the light of the Gospel to most of the towns and villages, both of the King's and Queen's counties, as well as some of those in Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny, and Tipperary; and the Lord in a marked manner opened his way, and gave success to his ministry. He remarks that he had least fruit among some professors, who had long a name and place in the Church of Christ. "These are too wise," said he, "to be zealous, and can reason much better than feel respecting the things of God. They have so long endeavoured to reconcile religion to standing well with the world, that their religion seems carnalized; and while they account it to be genuine, there is much in the life to lead to the apprehension that it is spurious. They boast of having borne the burden and heat of the day, because they suffered somewhat on account of religion; and now think it degrading to receive advice, or take example from those who have more recently embraced the truth. They seem to suppose that the wisdom that cometh from above is like that of man, the acquisition of which requires much time and study; whereas, heavenly wisdom is like Him from whom it proceeds, with whom one day is as a thousand years,

and is the present reward of the heart's being entirely given up to God."

He relates two or three incidents, worthy of record. A nobleman, having observed a great change for the better in many of his tenants, and learning that it was the result of their attendance on the Methodist ministry, was desirous to hear for himself. He therefore requested his steward to invite Mr. Averell to preach at a time at which he could be present, which was done. But meanwhile his wife exercised her ingenuity to have him otherwise engaged at the hour of the appointed service, in which she succeeded. However, a large congregation assembled, including many of the gentry, and two clergymen, all of whom appeared to take a deep interest in the word preached. Her ladyship died soon after, and thus the nobleman was set free to attend the services without opposition, which he did frequently, and not without benefit, as was observable in his after life; but the contempt of the Cross prevented him taking that open and decided stand for the truth, which he ought to have done.

In the neighbourhood of Roscrea resided a lady of affluent circumstances, who had been for a considerable time greatly afflicted. A poor woman who lived near her, and was in the habit of hearing Mr. Averell preach, repeated to her those scraps of his sermons that she remembered, which excited in her mind a strong desire to hear him herself. To this, however, her husband would not consent, from the apprehension that she might hear something that would alarm her and make her unhappy. She then remonstrated with him on the careless and irreligious life they were living, having not even the form of godliness, and pressed on him that they ought at least to have family worship. He replied that he had never read prayers, but if she would undertake to do so, he would bring the household together. She consented, but on the first attempt, either from over-excitement or some other cause, she was seized with paralysis, and was for several days with scarcely any symptom of life, her recovery being regarded as hopeless. A few hours after she had become thus affected, Mr. Averell arrived in the neighbourhood, and met the poor woman already referred to, who earnestly requested that he would pray for the lady. His whole soul was greatly drawn out to God on her behalf, and while pleading at the throne of grace, that the

Lord would spare her life until she received an assurance of salvation, he had faith to believe that God heard the request. Three months later, when Mr. Averell returned, he found she was so far restored as to be able to drive out in an easy carriage, but had lost the power of one side, and the use of both her feet. Being most wishful to see him, her husband called to invite him to the house; but said he would only see her for a short time in the presence of company he had invited to keep up her spirits, and that he should say nothing to alarm her. On arriving at the hour appointed, Mr. Averell found the hall door open, and entered, but met no person. He then noticed a door half open, and looked in, expecting to see a servant, but there sat the lady in an easy chair alone. With joy in her countenance she gave him a cordial welcome, then thanked God for the long wished-for opportunity of conversing about the concerns of her soul, and without reserve opened her mind to him. He saw at once that the Lord had been teaching her, and she only needed to be directed to the Saviour. While showing her the way of salvation, her husband and his friends entered the room, and she immediately requested Mr. Averell to pray. His heart was filled with the spirit of prayer, and so was hers; the Lord was present to bless, and soon turned their prayers into praises, for He spoke peace to her soul. Dinner being announced, the lady expressed a desire to sit at the table, which she had not done since her illness, and her husband proposed carrying her into the room, for up to this time she had not attempted to walk. "No," said she, "I shall show you what God can do for me!" and taking her husband's hand, she stood up, to the surprise of all present, and walked across the hall to the dining-room. Sometime after this she went to Bath, from which she returned much improved in health, but not quite restored. Mr. Averell had frequent opportunities of seeing her and always found her rejoicing in the assurance of her acceptance with God. Their last interview was indeed a happy one, but solemn and affecting; for though she was apparently in tolerable health, she seemed to think it would be their final meeting in this world; and so it was, for soon afterwards a second attack of paralysis snapped the brittle thread of life, but with her sudden death was sudden glory.

Having received a copy of a notice scattered abroad by a

neighbouring clergyman that he would, in a series of sermons, institute an inquiry into the doctrines of Methodism, Mr. Averell thought it his duty to go and hear him. The text on the occasion was the answer of the evil spirit to the vagabond sons of Sceva, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" The preacher, having heaped the grossest abuse on the Wesleys and their followers, and shamefully misrepresented their teaching, proceeded to ridicule the doctrine of the influence of the Spirit on the human heart. He admitted that in the beginning of the Christian dispensation, the power of the Spirit in working miracles was necessary; but added that now it was proud and presumptuous in anyone to pretend to be the subject of Divine influence; and attendance upon the ordinances of the Church was all that was necessary to constitute a Christian. He scouted the idea of "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins," and ridiculed all who made any pretensions to it. Notwithstanding that he had over and over again denounced the Methodists as heretics, schismatics, fanatics, and such like, about sixty of them remained to receive the Lord's supper at his hands. Mr. Averell announced in the porch of the church, as the people retired, that he would preach at a certain hour; and most of the congregation were present. He chose a text from the same chapter as the clergyman had selected, and contrasted the doctrines they had just heard preached with those read from the desk and communion-table, asking which they were to believe. Those read from the latter were supported by Scripture and the liturgy; but as to what had sounded from the former, it savoured of him who supplied the text. The above clerical controversialist, evidently feeling his own inability to deal with the subject, applied to the clergyman of an adjoining parish, probably the Rev. G. De la Poer Beresford, who in 1802 was appointed Bishop of Kilmore, and asked him to assist in preaching down Methodism; to which that minister replied, that it would not in all likelihood redound much to the honour of either of them to attempt such a work, and that even were they successful, it would do them no credit. "I have done little," said he, "to better the condition of my parishioners; nor, I fear, have you much more to boast of, and it would be too bad in us to endeavour to prevent those who are doing good. For my part, I will give them no obstruction. When I came

to this parish I had but five or six communicants ; but now, through the instrumentality of Methodism, I have commonly from sixty to over one hundred." This admonition, together with the dissatisfaction manifested by his own parishioners led to the giving up of the projected series of discourses.

In March this year, Charles Mayne left Newry, and went to reside at Freamemount, in the county of Monaghan, his native place. Here amidst opposition and discouragements he began to hold meetings in the neighbourhood ; and after a few weeks such numbers came to hear that he was obliged to take his stand out of doors. Though many heard, few seemed willing to obey ; yet some believed, and a small class was formed, which subsequently became part of a lively society, met in the neighbourhood of Cootehill by Mr. Boyd. After a few months, Mr. Mayne ventured to accept the invitation of Mr. Whitley of Gola, to preach in his malt-kiln, where he laboured with success. In the following September, the Presbyterian minister, an old gentleman of liberal sentiments, who had been his teacher some years previously, politely offered him the use of his meeting-house. In these public efforts the young evangelist was greatly encouraged by the sympathy and affection of a dear sister-in-law, who on his return home, met him with joy, strove to support him, and joined him in prayer for a blessing on his labours. This beloved sister the Lord made meet for His kingdom, and then took her to Himself.*

During this year a young man in Belfast, named William M'Kitrick, first attended the Methodist ministry, was convinced of sin, and obtained peace with God through faith in Christ. He resolved upon uniting with the Society ; but to carry out this resolution involved the loss of home. This sacrifice, however, he was prepared to make for Jesus, and so repaired to the house of a married sister in Liverpool, where, constrained by the love of Christ, he devoted himself to the work of the ministry in which he continued for fifty-six years, labouring with much fidelity, zeal, and success.

At this period, two young men were converted in Maguires-

* For an account of her experience and death, see the *Arminian Magazine*, 1799, p. 334.

bridge, James and Robert Martin. James was soon appointed leader, an office which he sustained with great fidelity and success for nearly thirty years, and became the leading Methodist in the town. For a long time he conducted the Sunday evening services alternately with the circuit preachers, and the week-day meetings in connection with Mr. James Palmer; and the Society increased and prospered under his care. Robert entered the itinerancy in England in 1804, in which he laboured for twenty-nine years with zeal and acceptance.

Dr. Coke, as authorized by the British Conference, made an evangelistic tour through the country. In the middle of June, we find traces of him in Cork, where he administered the Lord's supper, Mallow, and Bandon. Towards the end of the month, he preached at Brackagh Castle, where he met Mr. Averell for the first time, and they went together to Kilbeggan, and Tyrrellspass; where they had large congregations. Mr. Averell then returned to Brackagh Castle, preached there, and Mr. John Stephenson and he conducted a love-feast, at which the Lord vouchsafed much of His presence, and made it a time of great blessing.

The Conference met on July the 4th. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. Crook, secretary. Eight candidates were admitted on trial, including Francis Russell, who came out from Dublin, where he had been very useful, especially in visiting the hospitals and workhouses; Archibald Montgomery of Ballyconnell, who united in himself "a happy sweetness of disposition and address, with a good understanding and genuine piety;" Joseph Anderson, a young man of deep devotion and promising talents; John Stuart of Clones, James M'Keown, and John Hamilton. George Stephenson of Enniskillen, who had been called out during the year, was accepted as having travelled twelve months. There was an increase in the membership of one hundred and thirteen. It was resolved, that as far as possible there should be established through the kingdom societies for the benefit of the sick poor, on the plan of those already formed in Dublin and Waterford.

Sunday schools were ordered to be instituted wherever practicable; and the following directions given concerning children: "(1) Let the preachers consider themselves as the spiritual guides of the children of our people; (2) let the preachers meet children in every place, in one or more classes, once a week at

least, if possible, for Christian instruction, whatever be their number; (3) let persons be chosen out of the members of our Society, to meet them for the above purpose, in the absence of the preacher; (4) let the preachers particularly examine the parents, on their conduct to their children, and give them all necessary instruction or reproof on the subject; (5) let all the truly awakened children be incorporated into our Society, and let their numbers be distinguished in the returns given annually of the members of Society; (6) all that are under the age of fourteen, are considered as children.”*

In the Address to the British Conference, it is said, “The Lord has been with us in our Conference. Peace, harmony, and love have reigned triumphant, and not a jarring string has been heard among us. Our views are enlarged. We are looking forward, and praying for the universal spread of righteousness. The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, with which the north of England has been so astonishingly blessed, and with the minute particulars of which we have been favoured by Dr. Coke, has inflamed our desires. We long to see, yea, we believe we shall both see and feel, the same gracious shower in Ireland the ensuing year. The Lord is removing the prejudices of the great body of Roman Catholics, and a door seems to be opening among them.”†

This Address was regarded with such satisfaction by the British Conference that it was ordered to be printed in the Minutes, that the brethren throughout Great Britain might be informed of the complete union and love which subsisted between the two bodies.

The following marked answer to prayer was received, probably at this time. The wife of Mr. George Brown had suffered from a cancer, which had been cut out, but after a time reappeared, and caused great pain. Mr. Brown mentioned this to Mr. Walter Griffith, and they united in special prayer for her relief, which proved to be not in vain. One night, a few weeks subsequently, while both these ministers were in Dublin at the Conference, Mrs. Brown retired to rest as usual; but when she awoke in the morning she found her pain gone, and it did not

* Smith's History of Methodism in Ireland i.. p. 77.

† Minutes of the Irish Conference, p. 83.

return; thus realizing a fulfilment of the assurance "That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

The Society in Waterford received a valuable accession in Mr. J. J. M'Gregor, son of Mr. M'Gregor of Limerick, who came to the city as editor of *The Waterford Herald*. Here he not only employed his pen in support of the various religious and charitable institutions of the city, but was also zealously and efficiently engaged as a leader, and in connection with the Sunday school, of which he was one of the founders. The Lord especially blessed his labours in the conversion of an officer, in one of the regiments quartered in Waterford, and also of a private soldier, named Kenna, who was under sentence of death, but whose punishment was subsequently commuted to transportation for life.

Messrs. Charles Graham and James M'Quigg were appointed to Birr, with instructions that they should also be considered missionaries to the county of Clare, and should visit it alternately as often as possible. This was surely "in journeyings often," and long ones too.

A young man who had been received on trial, and stationed on the Cavan circuit, having declined to take his appointment, Mr. Lanktree was sent to fill his place, in conjunction with Messrs. Alexander Moore and Joseph Hennin. Their circuit was extensive, their ministerial labours necessarily abundant, and the accommodation sometimes far from agreeable; but the people were kind and considerate, and the Lord vouchsafed His blessing.

Mr. John Crook was stationed, both this and the previous year, in Coleraine, of which he always spoke with much respect and affection. He said he enjoyed advantages here superior to those he had possessed on any other circuit. These consisted of a choice collection of books, to which he had access; leisure for reading them; and the society of many persons of superior intelligence and piety. Amongst these were Robert Douthett, to whom already reference has been made. He was an excellent man, industrious and frugal in his habits, and rich in good works. Every week, as the Lord prospered him, he laid apart all he could spare from his family and business for the necessities of the

poor, committing the future to God. His death was sudden. Having prayed with his family, he retired, lay down to rest, and slept not to awake until the morning of the resurrection. His confidence was not in vain, for the Lord took care of his family. His brother Stephen Douthett, whom we have also mentioned, was a faithful and zealous leader, and held the office of steward from the time the Society was organized until his death, in 1811. He was a fine looking man, nearly six feet high, with a strongly marked countenance, and grey locks hanging down his shoulders. He was proverbially strict and just in business, faithful in reproofing sin, and warmly attached to the means of grace. John and Charles Galt were among the most respectable merchants in Coleraine. Charles was a man of large and liberal mind, and truly devoted to God. His private charities amounted to several hundred pounds in the year, and to the preachers and their families especially, he showed the utmost kindness and affection. John Galt was in his seventy-fourth year when he died. He did not recollect having been one day sick, and never tasted medicine. He had a retentive memory, sound judgment, was well acquainted with the Scriptures, and enjoyed religion. Although not a member of Society, he was a regular hearer, and a liberal supporter of the cause. Both brothers died happy in God, in 1801. John Kane and his wife, commonly called "good Mother Kane," were also among the early Methodists in this town. They lived near the barracks, and were remarkable for their care to have all things comfortable for the preachers. It is said they frequently invited all the members to tea. By a will dated 1785, John Kane bequeathed three hundred pounds for the benefit of the Society. Amongst others who were noted for their intelligence and piety, may be named Andrew and William Hunter, Dr. and Mrs. Maginnis, Mr. and Mrs. John M'Kenny, and Mrs. Nicholls. The last-mentioned lady reared seven sons, all of whom entered, and several obtained honourable distinction in the service of their country. Her eldest son, Sir Edward Nicholls, occupied the chair at a missionary meeting in Coleraine, and in his address mentioned having been in his youth presented by his mother to Mr. Wesley. The venerable servant of God, as was his wont, laid his hand on the youth's head and gave him his blessing. Learning on inquiry that he had made choice of the army as his profession, Mr.

Wesley's advice to him was, "Never turn your back on a friend or a foe." "This advice," said Sir Edward, "I have never forgotten. The wounds I received in fighting my country's battles, and honourable recognition of service by my Sovereign, prove that I always faced the foe; and my presence here to-night shows that I have not turned my back on my friends." "The members of the Coleraine Society, at the close of the last century," says the Rev. W. Ferguson, "were not excelled by any Christian Society in the world, for those graces which adorn the Christian character."

The prosperity of the Society at Florence Court having rendered the erection of a chapel not only desirable but necessary, Daniel Bradshaw, Esq. presented a piece of ground at Violet Hill for a site, and gave a handsome subscription towards the funds. He also commenced a Sunday school, in which he and his three daughters taught; and this was the first Sunday school in this part of the country. Some months after it had been opened, one of the children—a little girl—while repeating a lesson in Wesley's "Tokens for Children," manifested great anxiety about her soul; a leader then engaged in prayer; several of the young persons present, were deeply affected, and a work of revival thus commenced which extended to the older members of the families, many of whom were led to give themselves to the Lord. Three years later, when Mr. William Ferguson was appointed to the Ballyconnell circuit, which included Violet Hill, he found the greater part of those thus brought into the Society, steadily walking in the way of righteousness.

In the meantime, there had been a great increase in both the Society and congregation, and all classes attended the services. Amongst the most serious and attentive of the hearers were three sons of the Earl of Enniskillen. One of these, the Hon. W. M. Cole, subsequently entered the Church, and in a few years was appointed Dean of Waterford. Having engaged in the work in the true spirit of a minister of Christ, he paid a visit to his diocese, and returned to Florence Court to make final arrangements for his removal; but the great Head of the Church ordered it otherwise. The Dean retired to rest at his usual early hour on a Saturday night, and next morning it was found that his spirit had fled to the eternal world. He was lovely in mind and

person, and promised, had his life been spared, to be an ornament to the Established Church.

Mr. Averell continued his active and earnest work for Christ. The following were some of the many places visited by him in July: Annadale, of which he says, "Religion has found a resting place in this sweet family; sister Slacke especially is a most devoted, and at the same time very cheerful Christian. During my stay here we were in almost uninterrupted waiting upon God, in which we had blessed fellowship with each other, and communion with the triune Deity." He greatly rejoiced to witness the prosperous state of religion throughout Tyrone, Armagh, and Monaghan, where he had large congregations, and saw much of the life and power of God. At Brackagh Castle, he found the good cause flourishing; a multitude of people assembled at Clara to hear the word preached; and in Tullamore and its neighbourhood there was evidence of a gracious work.

The month of August was employed by Mr. Averell in what may be termed his home field of labour; and he had the satisfaction of witnessing the increasing prosperity of the work. New places for preaching the Gospel were constantly opening to him, several additional classes were formed, and the people in general under his care grew in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour.

In September, having heard that a good work had commenced amongst the Palatines, at Newpark, in the county of Tipperary, and that between fifty and sixty had become members of Society, Mr. Averell went to see them; and never before had he witnessed more manifest displays of Divine power. Under the preaching of the word, the whole congregation was melted down before the Lord; some rejoicing in His love; and more deeply convinced of sin. The class meetings were indescribable: there was such rejoicing with some, and such weeping with others. Amongst the former was one who had been a Romanist, and in a most affecting manner gave glory to the Saviour, who had redeemed him from the ignorance, superstition, and sin in which he had been enthralled for forty years. The penitents were prostrate on the floor, and cried aloud for mercy. One of these was frightfully convulsed, and could utter nothing but shrieks. When prayer was offered for those under conviction, and this woman in parti-

cular, she seemed as if possessed by an evil spirit, and had to be held by several persons. At length the Lord heard the supplications of His people, and set her soul at liberty, so that she was found "at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in her right mind." Several others also at this extraordinary meeting obtained redemption in the blood of Christ.

At Durrow, seeing the Sabbath openly desecrated, Mr. Averell stood up in the street to preach against the sin thus committed; and had not spoken long when a large mob from the Catholic chapel, headed by the priest, collected, and with horrid yells threatened the lives of the preacher and his hearers. Stones were thrown freely; but the Lord defended His servant, so that he was enabled to continue preaching until the mob withdrew, and the service was concluded in peace. Next day, accompanied by Mr. M'Cornock, Mr. Averell visited Monasterevin, where, after having preached, they formed a society of about twenty persons. At Athy, the bright prospect of good had been clouded, through the Rev. T. Kelly having become in some measure alienated from the Methodists in his religious views and feelings.

On October the 5th, Mr. Averell preached the opening sermon in the new chapel at Roscrea, "a handsome building capable of accommodating about four hundred people." On November the 18th, he conducted "a most blessed love-feast in Rathdowney—a wondrous thing there, it being the first ever held in the town. The presence of God was graciously manifested, nor was there one present who did not feel it." Nine days later the devoted evangelist had a very encouraging time in Mountrath, where many were brought into the fold. There was, he says, a most extraordinary increase in both the town and country. On his way home he preached for the first time in a place the most proverbial for wickedness in all that part of the country, had a large congregation, and God made the stout hearted amongst them tremble. Several who had been violent opposers of the truth felt its force, and were laid in the dust before Him, against whom they had sinned.

Messrs. Averell and Tidd spent most of December in travelling through Tipperary, Limerick, Clare, and Galway; and in almost every place they visited, great power accompanied the preaching of the word. Amongst the Palatines at Newpark, the Lord

continued to carry on a mighty work in the face of much opposition. Most of those in the Society were full of the life of God, and happy in His love. One of the leaders, Peter Cooke, a poor, illiterate man, and "as rude in his appearance as the mountains on which he dwelt, lived as near the Fountain of life" as anyone Mr. Averell had known. After preaching, when the two evangelists had quite exhausted themselves in prayer, and the people could not be prevailed on to rise from their knees, Peter prayed with marvellous power and blessing. At Corrofin, where Mr. Averell preached in the Market-place, the priest and his people formed the principal part of the audience; all listened with attention, and several seemed deeply affected. Some of the Romanists with tears expressed their gratitude for having heard the Gospel. On the following day about four hundred persons were present at the service, one half of whom seemed to be under conviction. At Galway the evangelists preached morning and evening to a considerable part of the Protestant inhabitants, about twenty of whom were members of Society. Christmas-day was spent at Cloughjordan. There was preaching early in the morning, the Lord's supper at noon, and preaching again in the evening, while the intervals were employed in various religious exercises. On the day following the quarterly meeting was held; the Lord gave His blessing; and great was the rejoicing of His people.

CHAPTER VII.

1795.

MR. AVERELL having spent most of January, 1795, among those who were the firstfruits of his ministry, at the end of the month again left home to travel through the country and work for Christ. At Kilkenny, "a poor, barren soil, where there were a few devoted to God," he had a larger and more serious congregation than usual. At Newpark, all was life and zeal, and much power attended the preaching of the word. But on returning home the evangelist was wickedly assaulted by a number of ruffians, from behind a hedge. Riding up suddenly, he was close to them before being recognised, and then they shouted loudly, "There he is! kill him! kill him!" * A volley of stones followed, not one of which struck him; and then the assailants ran in pursuit, with horrid yells, until, finding they could not overtake him, they had to give up the chase. At Carlow, the people had been very careless, but were aroused to earnestness, the Lord blessing the ministrations of His word. At Monasterevin, a short time previously, one of the preachers had come to the town, and proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, large congregations assembled, and many realized the Gospel thus preached to be the power of God to their salvation.* Now there was the prospect of a good work, owing very much under God to the wisdom, piety, and zeal of Mr. Fox, the leader of the class there.

In Ballybrittas, Mr. Averell formed a society of seventeen members, most of whom were Presbyterians, well instructed in the Scriptures. At Rosenallis, he found "the most lively Society on the Athlone circuit," amongst whom he spent a profitable time. At Maryborough, Mr. Tidd preached a powerful sermon in the court-house, where he had often presided as a justice of the peace.

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1832, p. 100.

The good work had so prospered in the town that there were about fifty in Society, most of whom were alive to God. At Rathdowney, Mr. Averell addressed the largest congregation he had seen there. How changed was the scene in this town! For nearly twelve months, at every visit the servant of God had been assailed and pursued by an impious mob; but now he was hailed as a messenger of peace. In Shinrone, he found that the small Society had been much strengthened by the accession of some converted soldiers, through whose instrumentality the truth was maintained against powerful opposition. At Roscrea, there was a large congregation, and at the love-feast upwards of twenty were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "It was a high day, and the Lord was as the dew unto Israel." At Ballyhuppahane, the people who assembled numbered about one hundred and fifty, upon whom the Lord poured out His Spirit, and five were brought to the saving knowledge of the truth. At Maryborough, the congregations were large, and they had a blessed time of refreshing.

At the end of May, Mr. Averell entered upon another tour, which included the greater part of the kingdom. At Ballybrittas, he found a spirit of awakening, and the class recently formed much increased. At Monasterevin also, the cause had prospered, and the Society consisted of fifty-six members deeply experienced in the things of God. He spent a week in Dublin, preached twice each day, and the Master stood by him, giving him favour in the sight of the people. "Never did I meet," he says, "with any persons more easily pleased in preaching; they wish to hear nothing but the plain unadulterated Gospel of the Saviour. I have found myself as much at home with the sweet loving followers of Jesus in this city, as if I had been amongst my own plain simple people in the country." At the previous Conference, permission had been given for the erection of a third chapel in the metropolis; and, according to Myles, one was completed, or purchased, this year, called the German Church.

At Drogheda also a chapel had been erected,* and the Society was strengthened by the accession of Robert and William Armstrong, sons of John Armstrong of Lisrace.† Mr. Averell spent two days in the town, "with a sensible, steady, loving

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1882, p. 874

† *Ibid*, 1861, p. 147.

people ;” he preached with much comfort and blessing, and also held a love-feast, at which the Lord was graciously present. Some converted sailors added much to the interest and profit of the service. At Dundalk, where the chapel had been built five years, the Society and congregations were small. “Pride and Popery were triumphant here.” In Newry, there was a lively, thriving Society of about one hundred and thirty members, and a numerous and attentive audience to whom God made His word a blessing. At Drumcree, Tanderagee, Killyman, and Dungannon, where Mr. Averell occupied the Presbyterian meeting-house, the congregations were very large, and the Lord greatly blessed the preaching of His word. At Charlemont, the evangelist preached in the open air to about three thousand persons, and the love-feast which followed was the most blessed he had ever attended ; never before having seen so many witnesses of the truth at one meeting, or felt so much of the power of God. The Methodists of Coleraine he pronounced “the most warm-hearted, loving, deeply devoted Society,” he had met with : everything about them partook of the spirit of primitive Christianity. At Garvagh, he had a cordial reception, and a good audience. At Magherafelt, there was but little encouragement, the truth having been long preached, with not much apparent effect. At Mullan, there was a numerous audience at the open-air service ; after which a love-feast was held, at which there was much of the presence of the Lord, and four persons were made happy in His love. At Omagh, in the court-house, and at Sidaire the congregations were good.

At Enniskillen, a quarterly meeting was held ; there was a very large attendance, chiefly from the surrounding country ; and the people listened with attention, and testified freely to what God had done for their souls. At Violet Hill, in the house of Mr. Bradshaw, there was much of the presence and power of the Lord. When at prayer, after preaching, a woman cried aloud for mercy, in great distress of mind, for whom the servants of God pleaded until her soul was set at liberty. After the service concluded, they were attracted upstairs by the cries of another woman, whom they found in great anxiety seeking mercy. The Lord heard prayer ; and while they were pleading for her, a third who was present became greatly distressed in mind, for whom

God was entreated, till peace was spoken to her soul. Mr. Averell was then called into another room, where was prostrate on the floor, groaning for redemption, a Romanist, whom the Lord emancipated from the thralldom of both sin and Popery. Then two others were found agonizing in prayer, who persevered until the Lord brought them into the glorious liberty of His children. Thus in the course of that evening six precious souls were brought out of darkness into marvellous light. On the following evening, Mr. Averell preached in an adjacent grove to about one thousand persons, amongst whom the Lord made bare His arm. The evangelist also preached at Sligo, where there were many devoted Christians in the Society; and at Manorhamilton, to a full house of attentive hearers. One of these was Robert Davis of Milltown, who a few years previously had listened outside the door of a neighbour's house, in which a prayer-meeting was held, and thought he could write out as good a prayer as any of them; but on making the attempt discovered they had something which he had not. This led him to seek further light; he attended the services regularly, became a member, and soon obtained peace and joy in believing. He then opened his house for the preaching of the Gospel, and was appointed a leader, the duties of which office he discharged with much zeal and integrity.

But we must turn from Mr. Averell to direct our attention to others, who also were at work for the Master. Mr. Ouseley continued his zealous, though somewhat irregular efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ. Of these labours there is no formal record, but traces exist which show that they must have been prodigious. Families in widely distant neighbourhoods, that ascribe their conversion to his instrumentality, are still to be found; and some of his sons in the Gospel rejoiced to date their conversion from this period. Amongst these was a young man, named William Cornwall, a good Irish scholar, who entered the itinerancy in 1814. He was a man of unassuming manner, unbending integrity, and good sense. Mr. Ouseley eagerly availed himself of the opportunity of witnessing for Christ, afforded by the gatherings at patrons, stations, and wakes. The last of these especially have been frequently and successfully used by earnest itinerants for calling sinners to repentance. The

presence of death, the number of people assembled, and the desire for something to occupy the time, all present peculiar facilities for proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, though greatly marred, however, in many instances by frivolity and drunkenness. Into scenes of this kind Mr. Ouseley was wont to make his way, and kindly greeting the people, would with solemnity and pathos entreat them to meet their God.

On one of these occasions, as the priest was reading mass, and the people were on their knees, Mr. Ouseley unexpectedly rode up. Dismounting, he knelt in the midst of the congregation with manifest solemnity. As the priest went on reading in a tongue of which the people knew not a word, the stranger took up passage after passage, selecting, though unknown to his hearers, those portions which conveyed directly Scriptural truth or solemn warnings. He adroitly translated the words from Latin into Irish, repeating them aloud after the priest. Then, with deep feeling, he said at the end of each passage, "Listen to that!" The priest seems to have been overwhelmed and awed, and the people completely melted. When the service was ended, and all rose up, Mr. Ouseley urged upon those present the necessity of having their peace made with God, telling them that it was possible so to do by real repentance and true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. As he left, the crowd said to the priest, "Father, who is that? Who is he at all?" "I do not know," said their pastor; "he is not a man at all; sure, he is an angel. No man could do what he has done." Long afterwards Mr. Ouseley met with a peasant, and accosted him thus: "My dear man, would you not like to be reconciled to God, to have His peace in your heart, and stand clear before the great Judge, when He will come in the clouds of heaven to judge the world?" "Oh, glory be to His holy and blessed name," replied the man, "I have His peace in my heart; and the Lord be praised that I ever saw your face." "You have! What do you know about this peace? When did you see me?" "Don't you remember the day, sir, that you were at the berrin', when the priest was saying mass?" "I do very well. What about that day?" "Oh, sir, you told us then how to get that peace; and I went, blessed be His holy name, to Jesus Christ my Saviour, and got it in my heart, and have had it here ever since." Thus the Lord fulfilled His assurance: "Cast

thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."*

A short time previous to this a Methodist chapel was erected in the churchyard at Tuam, by Mr. S. Potter† of Mount Potter, at whose house the preachers were accustomed to be entertained. Soon after it was completed, the Roman Catholic Bishop called on the Hon J. D. Bourke, the Protestant Archbishop of the diocese, and warned him that if they would not use joint efforts to stay the fanaticism and mania generated by the Methodists, who were turning the world upside down, their flocks would be scattered, and the Church destroyed. On his Grace inquiring how best they could arrest the progress of these enemies of the churches, the crafty Jesuit informed him of the conventicle recently built within limits forbidden by an old Act of Parliament, and that therefore he had power to stop the services and have the building destroyed. The Archbishop accordingly gave orders that the chapel should be taken down, and then left the neighbourhood. While it was seen by all parties that the order must be obeyed, it was agreed that the use of the building might be retained until the Archbishop signified his intention of returning, which was not expected in less than six months, and in the meantime special prayer should be offered that the Lord would avert the impending calamity.

During the interval Mr. Potter dreamed one night that the Archbishop died on his way home, that he saw the retinue and livery of the new Archbishop, and that similar efforts were again made to influence him against Methodism but in vain. He told the dream to his wife, as it deeply impressed him, and expressed his conviction that it would be realized; but she laughed at it as mere superstition. Some days afterwards, however, she announced to her husband that the Archbishop was on his way home, and within a few miles of the town; and inquired, what had become of his dream. He merely said, "Well, dear, he is not home yet." Strange to say, his Grace took sick at the hotel, and died there, within ten miles of the palace. Some time subsequently, in walking through the town one day, Mr. Potter saw a carriage,

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 58-62.

† Grandfather of the Rev. S. G. Potter, Sheffield.

with servants in livery, which he immediately recognised as those seen before in his dream. All other details were as strikingly fulfilled. Efforts were again made by the Romish Bishop with the new Archbishop, the Hon. William Beresford, who sent for Mr. Potter and objected to his proceedings. But upon remonstrance from him, with a declaration that he was ready to bow to authority, and then leave it in the hands of God, the Archbishop said, "I will not inhibit you. If the work be not of God, it will come to nought; if it be, I dare not be found fighting against Him." This resulted in the continuation of the Methodist services, which flourished for a long time under episcopal sanction.*

This period was very unfavourable in some respects to the spread of the Gospel. A spirit of lawlessness and rebellion arose; mobs of Romanists called Defenders, disguised and armed, assembled in different parts of the kingdom, and attacked the houses of obnoxious persons. Thus nightly depredations, plundering of arms and property, beating, burning, and killing were of frequent occurrence. The Protestants were compelled to associate for mutual protection, and their keeping watch by night became general. Unhappily, some did not attend to the admonition of our Lord, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," and thus became victims to strong drink, or were influenced by revengeful passions to disorderly conduct, subversive of all Christian feeling, and unworthy of the cause they supported. It thus became a sifting time to many of the Societies. That the preachers were suffered to travel unmolested must be attributed to the special care of Providence.

On one occasion intimation was given to Mr. Foster of Grogey, that his house was to receive some attention the next time the preacher came round. Having consulted with some friends, it was arranged that they should prepare to give their visitors a warm reception if they assumed a hostile attitude, but if otherwise admit them peaceably. Accordingly the male members of the congregation brought with them to the service their fire-arms; one of the most resolute sat, immediately in front of the preacher, with a brace of pistols; and a loaded whip was placed behind the minister, so that if the spiritual weapons proved

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1857, p. 800.

ineffectual he might resort to the carnal. A number of the Defenders did come, each one having a heavy stick, and observing how matters stood, quietly retired.*

Some of the Methodists were marvellously preserved in the hour of danger. One instance will suffice, that of Mr. North, and his brother-in-law Mr. Bowes, who resided beside each other at Drumalure, in the county of Cavan. At midnight, on March 16th, a band of the Defenders, numbering about thirty, having placed some of their gang as sentinels on the highroad, proceeded to attack the houses, and broke open the two front doors simultaneously. The ruffians then dashed in, and one of them began to beat Mr. North, when his wife rushed forward to shield him from danger, or share his fate. The fellow then made a stab at her with a bayonet, which missed its aim and stuck in the wall. Just then, before there was time for a second thrust, the report of a gun outside was heard, which led the rascals to hasten out to see what had occurred. Meanwhile those who had entered the house of Mr. Bowes were met by a faithful dog, that impeded their progress, and saved the life of his master. During this conflict, a son of Mr. Bowes seized a loaded gun, and in the confusion escaped out of the house followed by one of the Defenders, who attempted to shoot him, but missed fire. The lad then presented his weapon, saying, "Here's what won't miss;" and shot the man dead. His companions seeing this became greatly enraged; and one of them swore he would shoot the youth, fired, and the shot took effect, fatally indeed, but it was on another of their own party, who stood convenient. Thus baffled, the gang retreated, carrying with them their slain companions; but more evil awaited them. Forgetting those whom they had placed on guard outside and ordered to fire on any that should attempt to escape, and being mistaken for members of the families, they were received with a volley which must have done fearful execution. Then the reports of so many guns roused some of the Protestants in the neighbourhood, who hastened to the assistance of their friends; and meeting some of the retreating party, challenged them. One of the Defenders replied with a thrust of a pike and a dreadful oath. The Protestants instantly fired; two

* *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1885, p. 5.

of the Defenders fell down dead, and the rest fled. On removing the disguises from the bodies of the slain, they were discovered to be near neighbours. Truly "The Lord is known by the judgments which He executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands."

Notwithstanding such stormy scenes, the good work prospered even in this neighbourhood. The love-feasts at Ballyhaise and Newtownbutler, proved seasons of much spiritual blessing. In the latter place especially the Spirit was poured out so abundantly, that the people who had assembled in the morning could not be dismissed until a late hour in the evening. Amongst the triumphs of Divine grace was Adjutant Malone of the 8th Light Dragoons. He had been much given to intemperance, while his poor afflicted wife sought consolation in God, and was instant in prayer on his behalf. His regiment being ordered to join the army in France, he was suddenly recalled and sent on recruiting business. During the war, a great part of the regiment was cut off, including the officer who occupied the place of the Adjutant; but still this wild and wayward soldier continued to indulge in his besetting sin, until one night, after his accustomed excesses, he awoke believing himself to be in flames and surrounded by devils. He leaped out of bed, began to cry to God for mercy, and abandoned his sinful habits. His sense of sinfulness and apprehension of the wrath of God continued until at length the Lord, in infinite compassion, pardoned his sins, and enabled him to rejoice in His salvation. He lived for many years a monument of the mercy and grace of God.

As there was no place of worship at Cootehill, except a small hovel of little value, the friends there began to think of erecting a chapel; and Charles Mayne having applied to the Earl of Bellamont, his lordship at once granted a piece of ground, free of rent, and added a subscription of twenty guineas towards the building. Thus the way was opened for the establishment of Methodism on a permanent basis in this locality; and the new preaching-house proved to be the birthplace of many souls.

Dr. Coke made his usual evangelistic tour through the country this spring. At the end of April, he spent a couple of days in Athlone. At Cootehill, he was introduced to the Earl of Bellamont, with whom he breakfasted, and whom he pronounces "a

pattern of politeness." His lordship took the doctor to see the site he had given for a Methodist chapel, and then accompanied him to the preaching service. At Clones, he preached twice, selecting for his text on one of these occasions the prophecy on which he so frequently loved to dwell, "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." On June the 12th he arrived at Drumcree, worn out by incessant labour, having frequently had to preach in the open air, owing to the large congregations that attended his ministry. Here he preached out of doors to an assembly of at least one thousand persons. Next day at noon he addressed in Scotch street an audience similar in number to that of the preceding evening. Although all this district of country was greatly disturbed by the Defenders, who seemed intent on the destruction of the lives and property of the Protestants, it did not seem in any way to hinder the good work prospering. On Sunday morning, the 14th, Dr. Coke preached at Tanderagee to two thousand persons, and again in the afternoon about seven thousand were present. The word was clothed with Divine power, and had a manifest effect on many in this vast assembly. At Charlemont, the house was excessively full, the heat of which, together with his extraordinary exertions, proved too much for the doctor, so that he was obliged to give up; and for nearly a fortnight was confined to bed, with a bilious fever, in the house of Mr. Levinston, Armagh, the kindness and attention of whom, and of his physician, Dr. Atkinson, he says he could never forget. When the disease was at its height, his great anxiety was for the poor negroes in the West Indies, for whom he feared few would care, if he were removed.

The Conference met on July the 3rd. Dr. Coke was president. Five young men were received on trial, and four placed on the list of reserve. There was one death, Thomas Elliott, "a deeply pious and zealous man, with good gifts," who, having been in the work only six years, died of consumption, brought on by excessive labours. The increase in the membership was one thousand one hundred and eighty-nine. Special attention was directed to prayer-meetings, in connection with the revival of the work of God; and instructions given that means should be used to establish and sustain them as extensively as possible. The question of the observance of the Lord's day was also considered; and, it

being feared that some of the people were not sufficiently faithful in this matter, the Assistants were directed to exclude from the Society every person who bought or sold on the Sabbath, except in cases of medicine for the sick, and necessaries for funerals. The Society at Lisburn having sent a memorial requesting to have the Sacraments administered, the Conference replied, saying, they had taken their request into long and serious consideration, and were unanimously of opinion that it was not expedient then to introduce to this kingdom the administration of the Lord's supper by the preachers.* Arrangements having been made for a book room in Dublin, Mr. Joyce was appointed book steward. In the Address to the British Conference, it is said, "We rejoice and bless God, that we have it in our power to inform you that He hath owned our labours in the year that is past, and that He is building up Jerusalem in troublesome times. Great have been the disturbances in our nation among those who are without; yet, through all, the great Head of the Church has wonderfully preserved and prospered us."

Mr. Lanktree was stationed on the Coleraine circuit, which at this time embraced the Antrim shores from Portrush to Glenarm, thence it stretched to Ballymena, Portglenone, Ballaghy, Magherafelt, and Newtownlimavady, including numerous small towns and country places. There were here many difficulties to be contended with, and much to suffer. Disaffection toward the Government had infected both town and country, while infidelity and profanity raised the standard of hostility to the religion of Jesus. Secret societies abounded, and the spirit of revolt and rebellion became general. The Society in Ballymena especially was greatly sifted; but there were some devoted persons there, veterans in the cause, who stood like pillars of iron. Notwithstanding, however, these discouraging circumstances, the work prospered, and Societies were formed at Garvagh,—where, although the numbers were few, they were full of zeal and love,—Ballymoney, and Roseyard. At the last mentioned place, Mr. Lanktree received some abuse on his first visit; but on his return found an open door for the Gospel, which was chiefly owing to the liberal Christian spirit, evinced by the local Seceding minister.

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1868, p. 920.

In the history of Irish Methodism there are numerous and striking examples of those "picturesque monuments of grace" which have been raised up in connection with almost every revival of religion. One of these was Larry Logan. Born of Roman Catholic parents, and surrounded from earliest years with the superstitions of Popery, he was one of those poor half-witted creatures of whom almost every village has its specimen, tenderly commiserated by the charitable, and cruelly tormented by the malevolent. At what time, or under what circumstances, Larry was converted is not recorded; but it is highly probable that as he tramped through the country he first heard the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed by one of the Methodist itinerants who were wont to preach the Gospel out of doors so fearlessly and faithfully. Idiots in general are unsusceptible of the higher emotions of our nature, but here was one who listened with amazement and deep emotion to the story of a Saviour's love. No doubt the people looked with wonder at the poor dazed fellow, as the big tears chased each other down his pallid cheeks, and he wrung his hands with despairing grief; but thenceforward he was a new man. True, there still remained many things in his dress and manner strongly indicative of mental imbecility; but he was perfectly harmless, strictly moral, and, according to his capacity, deeply pious.

Resolved to be no longer dependent on charity for subsistence, Larry became a pedlar, and travelled through the country selling pins and needles, threads and tapes, thimbles and scissors, together with Bibles and Testaments. Numerous illustrations might be given of his never-failing power of repartee, knowledge of the Scriptures, and fidelity in reproving sin. He would say, "Don't tell a lie more than a Quaker, keep the Sabbath like a Presbyterian, fast like a Papist, and pray like a Methodist, and you will surely get to heaven." One Sunday morning when at class, near Coote-hill, on the leader, William Stewart, inquiring the state of his mind, he replied, "I am sad and bad. The Lord is so good to me and I am so bad to Him, that I am sometimes afraid I shall have my heaven here." At the close of the meeting, he buckled his satchel on his back, slung his hour-glass about his neck, and taking up his sticks quietly retired. Mr. Stewart walked with him a short distance, and being obliged to return, said: "Larry,

do you think I shall ever see you again?" He replied, "The Blessed knows that. I am very old: it is seventy years since I was born." "Well," answered the youthful leader, "I trust we shall meet in a better world. Farewell." Larry took off his hat, bowed on one knee, and lifting up his hand, said: "There is many a grain of sand in the world, and many a blade of grass in the fields, and many a dewdrop on each blade, and blessings more than all these be with you and all you love, you man of diamonds. Farewell." They then separated, never to meet again in this world. Not long after this memorable parting, the body of Larry was found on bended knees behind a ditch, where he had been engaged in prayer; but he himself had passed from the throne of grace on earth, into the more immediate presence of God, to join in the purer worship of redeemed saints and holy angels, around the throne in glory.

At this period there resided at Monaghan a Mr. Thompson, who was one of the leading Methodists in the town; and also a Miss Bradshaw who was a frequent visitor at his house, on which occasions Marian Thompson, a child of five years of age, would place a stool at her feet, and sit on it to hear the old lady speak of Jesus and His love. Becoming deeply imbued with Divine truth this child exercised a singular influence on those around her. A military officer, who sometimes visited at the house, said to Mr. Thompson, "I wish you would keep that child out of the way when I am here. I love the little thing, but her image keeps haunting me. If I let out an oath, up goes her finger, with 'O! Major, Major!' And when I am swearing among my brother officers, before my mind's eye up goes that little finger." Soon after Miss Bradshaw departed this life, Marian was about to follow. It was a Sunday evening; the father sat by her bed, and an elder sister, Margery, was in the room when the clock struck five. "Aren't you going to preaching, father?" said the invalid. "No, my dear, not this evening." "Why, father?" "Because," said the good man, as the tears flowed fast, "I think I shall not have you another Sunday." "O! father," said the dying child, "can't you spare me to go to Jesus?" After a little while, she started up in the bed, reached out her arms, and cried, "O, Miss Bradshaw, Miss Bradshaw! Look, father, look!" and sank back again. Margery ran out of the room, and meeting her nurse on the stairs, clasped

her with her arms, saying, "O, nurse, I am so frightened; Marian has been calling on Miss Bradshaw; and the pillow is all brightness, and I am so frightened." The nurse gently opened the door, and again withdrew, for she saw that the child's spirit had fled, while Mr. Thompson bent low beside the remains. This Margery was afterwards Mrs. Connolly, a leading Methodist in Dublin, who narrated this as an impressive recollection of her childhood.

During this year, Mr. John Hughes* came to Portarlington to live, and "found a right good society." For more than fifty years he continued in office here, holding a prominent and responsible position as leader and exhorter; and by his wise counsels and powerful influence did much to counteract the baneful effect of local scandal and dissension.†

But to return to Mr. Averell, whom we left in the west of Ireland. At Mr. Fleming's of Abbeyville, he had a good congregation. At Foxford, "an awfully wicked place," his hostess in the inn was the only person in the town, so far as he could learn, that had any fear of the Lord; and she collected a few together, to whom he preached. At Turlough, there was was a large audience, and a profitable meeting of the Society. At Castlebar, he found that notwithstanding there was a good chapel, and many influential friends, including the clergy and a gentleman, formerly a local preacher, now agent to Lord Lucan, the cause was low. At Manulla, in the street, there was a large and attentive audience, many of whom, including twelve converted Romanists, were deeply affected under the word. At Burriscarra, in the house of a clergyman, Mr. Averell had not long continued his discourse, when his voice was so drowned by the cries of the people that he could not proceed, and commenced a prayer-meeting, during which there was an extraordinary manifestation of the power and presence of God. A love-feast was then held, at which the simple but powerful testimonies borne to the truth by the people, and especially by the converted Romanists, so affected the clergyman, who himself had been a Roman Catholic, that with a grateful heart he gave glory to God.

At Hollymount, there were a few devoted Christians. At Tuam, there were large congregations, and a society of about

* Father of the Rev. John Hughes.

† *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1883, p. 565.

thirty persons, chiefly poor in this world and rich in faith. At Galway, where it was said one hundred and seventy had gone over to the Church of Rome in the previous ten years, the Lord had still a seed to serve Him, there being fourteen zealous and consistent members of Society. At Ennis, where Mr. Averell was the guest of Captain Blood, he preached to a large congregation of fashionable people, to whom he had little hope of being useful. In Limerick, he found religion had made considerable progress, and amongst those who professed it were many who felt its power and enjoyed its consolations. At Kilfinnane, the people were enlightened by the Gospel, and exhibited its fruits; being neat, industrious, and pious. He spent a very happy time with them, both in ministering the word of life, and in meeting the Society, composed of as lively Christians as he had seen anywhere. At Mallow, he met some very warm-hearted people, and had a large congregation. Religion was low in the town, but there were some who realized its power. At Cork, he spent two very happy days, amongst a people with whom he could live or die; the congregations were large, much power accompanied the word preached, and the Society meetings especially were means of rich spiritual blessing. The preachers, Messrs. Sutcliffe and M'Farland, were full of zeal; there was a spirit of hearing generally abroad in the city, and great attention was paid to the children.

At Bandon, "a large market-town well populated with Protestants," a considerable number attended the services, and about seventy met in class. At Inishannon, there was a neat preaching-house, and about thirty members. At Kinsale, there was a comfortable little house of worship, and a united society. At Youghal, Mr. Averell preached four times to large congregations in the Presbyterian meeting-house, and had the satisfaction of seeing indications of good amongst the people. Though the audiences were not large at Clonmel, and the Society was small, there was much religious life, and the Lord was present in the services. At Kilkenny, notwithstanding the presence of Popery, and the comparatively small Protestant population, there was a large congregation, and much of the presence of the Master. Three months later, when Mr. Averell again visited the town, and exhorted the people to live to God, a Divine power rested on them; and so general was its influence that he did not perceive

one who remained unmoved. A Roman Catholic young lady, who had been attending the services for some time previously, was deeply affected, and openly declared she would thenceforth follow the Lord fully, no matter what opposition she might have to encounter.

Most of the months of August, September, and October, were employed by Mr. Averell amongst his own people, with an occasional visit to several places in more remote parts of the country ; and it was one continued season of rejoicing. The Lord subdued the prejudices of many and disposed them to attend the ministry of the Gospel. Nor was this all, there were in numerous places glorious conquests through the word, which proved powerful to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan. And what was not less gratifying, the Lord's people grew in grace, and walked in His commandments and ordinances blameless.

In November, Mr. Averell visited the counties of Kilkenny and Wexford. At Thomastown, "a seat of gross darkness," there were a few devoted Christians, in ministering the word of life to whom they were mutually comforted and refreshed. At New Ross, he preached to a considerable congregation in a very neat chapel erected by Mr. M'Cormick, and capable of containing about three hundred persons. On the following day the audiences were even larger, and there were blessed manifestations of the presence and power of God. At Inistioge, the evangelist found the truth prevailing notwithstanding powerful and unprincipled opposition ; but the want of a suitable place in which to conduct the services was much felt. This he was enabled to supply to the great joy of the friends, by obtaining from the landlord of the town the permanent use of a commodious school room. At Duncannon, Mr. Averell preached in a ball room, where God was present to give effect to His word. Here were some truly devoted Christians, amongst whom was sister Kirkman, an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile. At Carlow, where the Society prospered and the congregations were greatly increased, the word of the Lord did not return unto Him void.

In December, the evangelist visited Dublin, where he remained for two weeks, during which he preached at least once, frequently twice, each day, to very crowded congregations ; and it was a season of refreshing to himself, and of blessing to many others.

In the course of the two last weeks of the year, he had many gracious seasons. The quarterly meetings at Abbeyleix, Durrow, Newpark, Mountmellick, Mountrath, and Roscrea, and the early service on Christmas morning, together with the watch-night meeting at the close of the year, were all memorable times. He says he never within so short a period saw so many and such signal manifestations of the power of God. It was a time of awakening to sinners; many obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins; and believers were quickened to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

CHAPTER VIII.

1796.

IN January, 1796, Mr. Averell laboured chiefly in the vicinity of Tentower, and was much cheered in witnessing gracious manifestations of Divine mercy. "In every means," he says, "preaching, class-meeting, and religious conversation, the Lord was present, quickening, encouraging, comforting, and blessing His people." Some who had violently opposed the servant of God now came to hear him preach; and even the local vicar, who had spoken most bitterly against him, was so changed that he invited him to preach in his church, and wept under the preaching of the word. A few years previously there had been only sixteen adult Protestants in the parish; but now on the property of Mr. Averell alone, there were no less than forty, most of whom realized the life and manifested the power of godliness. However, persecution had not completely ceased. On one occasion the devoted evangelist was beset by a Popish mob, who pelted him with stones and threatened his life; but through the care of a merciful Providence, he escaped unhurt.

Soon, however, this indefatigable minister again set out to journey through the country, witnessing and working for Jesus, and with cheering success. At Newpark, he found the Palatines blessedly alive to God. At Killenaule, where a respectable man had opened his house for the proclamation of the Gospel, Mr. Averell preached to upwards of one hundred persons, and not without hope that in this wicked place God would raise up witnesses of the truth. At Thurles, into which a way had been opened by some of the military, he declared the counsel of God to many; and also found that the soldiers had established prayer-meetings, in which they were joined by several of the townspeople. At Borris-in-Ossory and Roscrea, the people were

favoured with gracious visits from the Lord, and some led to experience the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. At Birr, many came to hear, yet apparently to little purpose. But on Mr. Averell's returning to the town, he saw the dawning of a happier state of things in the Society; the blessing of the Lord rested on the efforts of His servant, and many who had been proof against the preaching of the word, were drawn to the Lord by personal intercourse. At Frankford, there was a large audience. At Ballyboy, a gentleman met Mr. Averell in the street, and invited him to preach in his house. In a short time about one hundred persons assembled, most of whom seemed exceedingly wild and thoughtless; but many of them took heed to the things which they heard. At Durrow, it being the Sabbath, Mr. Averell met the classes, and preached in the morning; and in the afternoon in the open air addressed a large concourse, amidst the bellowings of the beasts of the people, accompanied by several volleys of stones, which however inflicted no serious injury.

During April the evangelist's tour included parts of the counties of Tipperary, Limerick, Cork, Waterford, Wexford, and Kilkenny; throughout the whole he was signally favoured with the presence of his gracious Master; and in many places the Lord accompanied His word with much power, especially amongst the Palatines of Kilfinnane, and in the towns of Clonmel, Waterford, New Ross, and Kilkenny. At Tyrrellspass, he met a miracle of grace in the person of a young lady of superior understanding and high literary attainments, who on his previous visit to the town had been an avowed infidel, but now realized the transforming power of the truth she had despised, and rejoiced in the salvation of Him whom she had so lightly esteemed.

At the end of May, Mr. Averell set out again, and at Killaloe found a few who brought forth the fruit of righteousness. At Limerick, he spent five days, preaching to very considerable congregations, to whom the Lord gave evident tokens of His presence and power. At Adare, many of the inhabitants were faithful servants of God, and some witnesses of the all-cleansing power of the Saviour's blood. Of Courtmatrix, in which the people were called to the chapel by the sounding of a horn, Mr. Averell says, the Palatines of this favoured place were living exemplifications of the truth of Christianity; their Christian simplicity, love, and

zeal being beyond anything he had seen before. On June 1st, having been joined by Mr. Murdock, they proceeded to Mr. Marshall's of Riverville, near Castleisland, where was a small congregation, some of whom were devoted Christians. The preachers then visited Ballyseedy, and a colony of Palatines at Ballymacelligott, as well as Killarney, where they found a small society, with whom assembled as many of the townspeople as formed a large congregation. At Mr. Egar's, Ballymalis, a good number attended the services. At Milltown, Mr. Averell preached twice, and held a love-feast, at which about one hundred persons were present, most of whom evinced much of the life and power of religion. At Ballintaggart, the people assembled in the house of the Rev. Edward Nash, another of the Evangelical clergymen whom the Lord raised up at this period.

Meanwhile the good work prospered in other parts of the kingdom. At Coleraine, for some time previously the enemy had made use of some weak-minded person to sow the seeds of strife; but on February 25th there was a special prayer-meeting which was much owned of the Lord in repairing the breaches of Zion. A very gracious influence rested on all present; old and young were awakened to deeper spiritual life, so that subsequently the classes were better attended, and several additions made to the membership.*

At this period took place the conversion of James Field, who proved one of the holiest and most successful leaders raised up in connection with Irish Methodism. Born in 1768 at Ballyboy, of parents in humble circumstances, he received little education except what was acquired by his own application and perseverance. At eleven years of age he was sent to service, at sixteen apprenticed to a trade, and at twenty-five enlisted in the Royal Artillery. Abandoned to folly and vice, at times reproved by the Spirit and horror-stricken at his own reckless life, he became alarmed and determined to enter upon a better course; but soon his good resolutions were broken and forgotten. A restless wanderer after rest, tremblingly anxious for the safety of his soul, he had no one to tell him of the mercy of God in Christ. In this dissatisfied and anxious state of mind, he was ordered to Flanders, where he

* Unpublished Journal of Mr. J. Galt.

shared in the long and wearisome marches, severe privations, and numerous engagements of the British army, more than once narrowly escaping with life.

In March, this year, he was quartered at Duncannon fort, and here his favourite place of resort was the ale-house, and its frequenters his boon companions; but the day of his redemption drew near. Some time after his arrival, he was invited to preaching, and on inquiring where, was told in the General's parlour. It appears the Major's lady, who was a devoted Christian, had brought the Methodist itinerants to the fort, and obtained the use of this room for religious services. Field thought it was a grand place, and accordingly went. The preacher was Mr. John Stuart, who selected for his text, Ecclesiastes viii. 11, which at once awoke the slumbering conscience of the sinner, and as the sermon proceeded, all the wickedness of his life came before his mind, aggravated by many neglected warnings and broken vows. Soon after this evening, there was placed in his hands a copy of Alleine's "Alarm to the Unconverted," which reiterated the warnings of the sermon, deepened his convictions, and increased his apprehensions of future punishment. Reading the Bible now with more attention, and finding the doctrines of Methodism in accordance with its teaching, he regularly attended the services, which were held once a fortnight, resolutely broke off all companionship with the wicked, betook himself much to private prayer and meditation, and firmly purposed to give himself wholly to God. "Indeed," he remarks, "all things seemed to stop my wild career; and it appeared to me that if I did not turn then the Spirit would strive with me no more."

The Society having observed these indications of a work of grace, invited Field to unite with them; which he did, and soon afterwards went to a love-feast at New Ross. Messrs. Robert Banks and Thomas Edwards preached. Mrs. McCormick was the first to witness for Jesus, and concluded by saying, "No language can express the love of God." Field hung down his head, and reflected thus: "Wretch that I am, have I lived until my twenty-seventh year without enjoying this heaven of love? By God's grace I will not rest until I do." He wept bitterly, and was afraid to look up, thinking all would see the stamp of hell on his face. Subsequently, as he partook of the memorials of his

Saviour's dying love, his burden fell off, and the love of God was shed abroad in his heart. Leaving the church, rejoicing in the God of His salvation, he was afraid to speak to his friends, lest he should lose his happiness; and getting alone in a field, prostrated himself on the earth, and there poured forth his soul in gratitude, love, and praise.

Immediately after his conversion Field wrote, giving an account of what the Lord had done for him, to his father, who thereupon invited the preachers to his house, and a small society was thus formed at Ballybay. The brother and two sisters of James were savingly converted, at which his soul greatly rejoiced. His brother made rapid progress and occasionally met the class, but alas! fell, and the little flock was scattered; but again collected together.

Soon a sphere of usefulness was opened to the young convert nearer home. Mr. Edwards, whose ministry the Lord had greatly blessed to his soul, said he should take charge of the class at the fort. Field rose to object, but could not speak a word. Thus was he literally thrust out into the vineyard by the Lord of the harvest; and soon the power of his Christian life and faithful labours was seen and felt by both officers and men in the brigade.

Another notable conversion at this period was that of William Stewart of Milltown, near Omagh. He had received a liberal education, having been intended for the ministry of the Established Church, but, owing to the death of his patron, was disappointed, and apprenticed to an attorney. Shocked at the chicanery and vice of the office, he left it, and bound himself to a carpenter. He was then led to give his heart to God, become a member of the Society, and engage in work for Christ. The duties of a leader were discharged by him with remarkable efficiency and success, having at times no less than seventy members under his care. He was a man of great integrity and Christian consistency, so much so that it was a common saying in the neighbourhood, "If there is a good man upon earth it is William Stewart." His prayers and exhortations were accompanied with remarkable power, and his children rose up to call him blessed. As he advanced in life his appearance became patriarchal, and his face seemed to shine with heavenly radiance. A short time before death he said to a brother leader, "Tell my brethren at the love-

feast that I shall see them no more on earth, but I hope to meet them before the throne. Though one of my arms lies paralysed at my side, I have another that I can raise towards heaven, and shout, Victory! Victory! through the blood of the Lamb." In this spirit of holy exultation, he passed through death triumphant home, to be "for ever with the Lord."

Though a society had been formed at Clonakilty, it was small, and the visits of the preachers irregular. There was no stopping place for them in the town, but they were entertained a couple of miles distant, at Carhoo, in the house of Peter Good, a nephew of Joseph and Benjamin Hosford of Farranmareen. However, this year Sergeant Gregory was made very useful here; and amongst those he was the means of leading to the Saviour was a well-to-do weaver, named William Abbott, whose house was at once placed at the disposal of the preachers, and thus Clonakilty became a regular appointment on the Bandon circuit plan. The workshop of the young convert was used for the services until a large room was obtained in Myrtle Grove House, then vacant. This apartment was over a kennel, and as the master of the hounds had an aversion to the Methodists, he endeavoured by feeding the dogs during service to give as much annoyance as possible. Abbott was appointed a leader, and for forty-four years his walk was so steady and consistent that he won the esteem of all who knew him.*

Dr. Coke made his usual tour through the country this year. In April he preached and administered the Sacrament at Coleraine; and it was a time of rich spiritual blessing.† Early in June, he visited Cork, where he also commemorated the dying love of the Saviour; and on the 11th arrived at Limerick. Here he met Mr. Averell, and on the following day the latter preached in the morning to a large congregation; while the doctor addressed with much power a crowded audience in the evening, to nearly four hundred of whom he administered the Lord's supper. Next day the two evangelists proceeded together to Nenagh, where Mr. Averell preached to a large but disorderly assembly, with little prospect of good, save to the few pious persons who were present. Thence the ministers went to Cloughjordan, and the

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1840, p. 337.

† Unpublished Journal of J. Galt.

doctor addressed a numerous and very different congregation. Both in the ministry of the word, and the commemoration of the death of Christ, which followed, the Lord was graciously present. On the succeeding day, the servants of God came to Roscrea, and the doctor preached at noon, after which they passed on to Mountrath. Here the service was held in the open air, about two thousand persons being present, to upwards of five hundred of whom the Lord's supper was subsequently administered in the market-house.

The Conference met on July the 1st. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. William Smith secretary. Daniel Pedlow of Tanderagee, and Alexander Sturgeon, who had been called out during the year, were each recognised as having travelled twelve months; while there were received on trial ten others, including Thomas Edwards of the Tanderagee circuit, John C. Clendinnen of Downpatrick, Zechariah Worrell, Charles Mayne, William Douglas of Lurgan, William Sturgeon, and Andrew Taylor. There was one death, that of John Miller, a German, remarkable for his love and zeal, who after a very useful life died happy in God, just as one of his sons in the Gospel, Daniel Pedlow, entered the ranks from which his spiritual father was taken. The increase in membership amounted to nearly one thousand five hundred. Mr. Averell, who was present for the first time, was admitted into full connexion. He says he never before saw so impartial a tribunal as the Conference. Every preacher's character underwent the most searching scrutiny, and each was treated according to his desert.

Dr. Coke laid before the brethren an account of the failure of the colony intended to be established in the Foulah country; and after prayer and mature consideration, it was unanimously judged that a trial should be made in that part of Africa on the proper missionary plan. Messrs. Murdock and Patten having offered themselves for this important work, the Conference solemnly appointed them, and earnestly commended them and their undertaking to the prayerful sympathy of the people of God. This project, however, was not carried out.

The German church in the metropolis, either not having answered the purpose designed, or being no longer available, it was agreed that a new chapel should be erected in the city, and in

order to assist the Dublin brethren in carrying out this object, a collection made on every circuit through the kingdom and in every congregation.

Serious attention was given to the subject of the exchange of ministers with England. For nearly thirty years the greater number of the preachers in this country had crossed the channel; but in 1776, the Irish were in the majority; and this year there remained among the eighty-one members of the Irish Conference not one of the English itinerants. Ireland meanwhile had given to England some of its best evangelists, including William Thompson, Henry Moore, Adam Clarke, Walter Griffith, James M'Donald, and many others. The Irish brethren were now most wishful that this interchange should continue, and proposed a plan, which if carried out would prevent any confusion or apparent collision as to appointments between the two Conferences; but the ministers in England were evidently unwilling to cross the channel; and also considered that the expenses involved were so serious, in view of the debts by which they were then encumbered, that the interchanges should be as few as possible; and hence they ceased altogether.

At the British Conference of 1795, an arrangement had been adopted, which authorized the preachers in England, under certain circumstances, to administer the Sacraments; and as a number of petitions were presented to the Irish Conference praying for a similar privilege in this country, the subject was discussed at length, and finally it was resolved almost unanimously, that it was not expedient in the then state of the Connexion to adopt the Plan of Pacification. This act has been strongly condemned by some, being regarded as a means of greatly retarding the work, and eventually leading to the unfortunate division of 1816. Those who thus find fault with the preachers in Ireland should remember the marked difference that had taken place in the development of Methodism in this country as compared with Great Britain. On the British side of the channel, a large metropolitan chapel had been open for years, in which services were regularly held by the itinerants regardless of church hours, and the Sacraments duly administered; and preacher after preacher had been ordained to the work of the ministry by Wesley himself; while in Ireland, not only had

nothing of this kind taken place, but a solitary attempt to establish a service in church hours, three Sundays out of four, supported by all the influence of Wesley and Coke, had been frustrated by the determined hostility of the leading laymen in Dublin. The Connexion in Ireland was not prepared for a measure implying separation from the Church, there was no general desire for it, and had it been adopted then, the consequences would have been most disastrous.

During the previous year, the Lord's supper had been administered by Messrs. Sutcliffe * and M'Farland in Cork, and Gordon in Lisburn; and for this breach of discipline they were all three put back on trial. The desire for the ordinances, however, was very strong in these places, especially on the Lisburn circuit, of which we shall hear more again.

At the close of the British Conference, Messrs. Averell and Joyce, who had accompanied Mr. Smith, the representative there, left for Bristol, and thence set sail for Dublin. After tossing about for three days in the channel, they had to put in to Ilfracombe, where they remained for twelve days before the weather permitted them to proceed on their journey. Mr. Averell, having a deep impression that the Lord had a work for him to do in the town, used every means to obtain a place for preaching, but in vain. He then wrote to the clergyman in charge of the parish, offering his assistance on Sunday; but was informed the bishop had given instructions that no minister should be admitted to the pulpits within his jurisdiction, who was not licensed in the diocese. The Methodists then waited on the Dissenting minister, who having ascertained that they were Trinitarians, said he could not allow them to preach in his house, as the people would not receive their doctrine. So they went to church, and heard a philippic against false teachers, in which it was more than insinuated that some of them were present. At the close of the service Mr. Averell mounted a tombstone, and published, as one of those denounced in the sermon just delivered, he would preach on the Ropewalk in the afternoon.

* Mr. Sutcliffe subsequently wrote an excellent Commentary on the Bible, of which the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon says: "Sutcliffe, though an Arminian, is in general so good that we wish we had more of him; his style is vivacious and forcible."

About three hundred persons assembled, to whom the servant of God proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation with freedom and power. Before dismissing the congregation he announced that another Irishman would preach there on the following evening. At the appointed time, however, the owner of the place appeared, and would not permit Mr. Joyce to proceed; but at length consented to his occupying an old limekiln not far distant. When the meeting concluded, the preachers having been informed that there were two men present religiously disposed, made known to them their desire to obtain a place in which to preach, and were promised assistance. Early next day the men called at the inn to say they had procured a large room belonging to a woman who had been at the Sunday evening service, and was deeply awakened to a sense of her sinfulness. Delighted at the news the itinerants hastened to see the apartment, which they found to be a spacious one indeed, but in a disreputable locality. Shocked at this, they naturally hesitated to go to such a place, but the words of the Lord, "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you," arose in the mind of Mr. Averell with such force that he at once resolved with God's help to speak for Jesus there. Accordingly, a bellman was employed to publish that two Wesleyans would preach as arranged; but he, probably through misconception, announced that two Welsh lions had arrived, and would appear at a certain hour in such a place! At the appointed time the room was crowded with a motley assembly of the lowest and worst characters in the town, whose revolting appearance and tumultuous conduct almost intimidated Mr. Averell; but he determined not to allow them to disperse without hearing the glad tidings of salvation. The Lord gave His blessing with the word, and it became manifest many felt its subduing power. Thus encouraged, other services were announced for, large and orderly congregations assembled, and God set His seal to the truth. When the evangelists were about to leave, the people being much grieved, they were informed that other preachers not far distant would gladly visit them, if suitable arrangements were made. These having been effected Methodism was thus introduced and established at Ilfracombe.

The cause of God in Ireland had now difficulties of a new and serious form to contend with. Owing to the disturbed state of the country the yeomanry were called out, and as these included many Methodists, they were exposed to temptations to which they had not been accustomed, and by which they were in danger of being overcome. Thus when Mr. Averell visited Birr, he learned that of the two days in each week set apart for military exercise, one was the Sabbath; and large numbers of the inhabitants of the town, including some members of the Society, were drawn together as spectators, so that the Lord's day was openly desecrated. In fact, the din of war, military preparations, and yeomanry organization seemed to engross all thought, and be the only subject of conversation. In the regular army, however, it was different, as the charm of novelty was lacking. Thus at Boyle, Mr. Averell found the Society much alive to God, and preached not only in the town, but also in the barracks to the soldiers, amongst whom were several men of genuine piety. Here a new chapel was nearly finished; the site and timber, as well as a generous subscription, having been given by the Earl of Kingston. At Longford also there was a blessed work, both among the inhabitants and the military. Mr. Averell preached in the town to large and prayerful congregations; and almost in every place he went, where there were soldiers quartered, he found many of them truly devoted to God. At Tyrrellspass, the Lord had been glorified in the conversion of two persons, who had been infidels, and now zealously and effectively laboured to promote that religion which had been the subject of their scorn and ridicule.

Mr. John Hamilton was appointed to Connemara, a mountainous country, west of the county of Galway. Here his journeys were long and wearisome, and his fare often very scanty; but he persevered in his work until he sank into a low fever, in which he was almost destitute of care and medical skill. On regaining consciousness, he found himself alone in a hut, where he had sought an asylum, lying on a pallet of rushes with a mug of water by his side. When a desire for food returned, it is related, a dog came in with a large fish in his mouth, which he dropped beside the invalid. Thus a timely supply was afforded, in a way the more remarkable as the place was two miles from

the lake where the fish must have been caught.* “The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”

Mr. Lanktree was appointed as junior preacher to Sligo with Messrs. Thomas Ridgeway and William Wilson. He writes: “Here it pleased the Lord to bless my soul, and my labours, beyond anything I had ever witnessed. We had good congregations, and the Divine influence was soon apparent: young persons and children were much favoured. Some became deeply convinced of sin, and others obtained peace with God. My own heart was greatly enlarged. Even in dreams I had singular indications of the ingathering of souls into the fold of the Great Shepherd, which were blessedly realized.” During the whole year the work of the Lord prospered greatly, especially amongst the young men. One of them was a convert from Popery, named Feeney, who was much persecuted. Another was George Arbuckle, remarkable for his deep devotion and Christian love. Mr. Lanktree refers to an old disciple, Sarah M’Kim, in visiting whom he was greatly blessed. Although she had never learned to read she was familiar with the Word of God, and ready always to give an answer to every man that asked her “a reason of the hope” that was in her. “Sister M’Kim,” said Mr. Lanktree on one occasion, “when it is best with you, how do you feel?” “Just on the verge of heaven,” was her reply. “When it is worst with you, what is your experience?” “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.”

The Society sustained a severe loss in the death of Mrs. Slacke of Annadale, who fell a martyr to her loving devotion. As she approached the end of life’s journey, although in apparent health, all who conversed with her were struck with her unearthly appearance, and peculiar earnestness of spirit. When any of her friends parted from her, she spoke as if they would “see her face no more.” On Friday evening, November 18th, she made tea for Mr. John Bredin, who had been long a resident at Annadale, and then retired to her room. Having prayed with the maid who accompanied her, she sent her downstairs. A short time afterwards, when her daughter entered the room, she found that the

* Reilly’s Memorial of Ouseley, p. 189.

happy spirit of her mother had taken its flight to glory. It appeared that while this saintly woman was bowed in prayer she passed into the more immediate presence of God, to join in the purer worship of holy angels and redeemed spirits. A blessed and glorious end to a holy and useful life! Thus sudden death was sudden glory.

"A soul prepared needs no delays ;
The summons comes, the saint obeys :
Swift was her flight, and short the road ;
She closed her eyes, and woke with God."

The good work, however, greatly prospered on the circuit, within which this sainted woman had lived. At Loughpoint, into which Methodism had been introduced about two years, there was a blessed outpouring of the Spirit, leading to a large increase in the Society, so that there were no less than sixty meeting in class. At Ballymote and its vicinity, several were convinced of sin, and found peace and joy in believing. At Manorhamilton and the country round it, there were some remarkable displays of the power of God, and many seasons of refreshing from His presence. At Ballinamore and Newtowngore, the servants of God saw blessed fruit to their labours. At Bricklieve, where there was a promising work and large congregations, Mr. Lanktree was invited to preach in the Presbyterian meeting-house, which had been closed for some time. After the preacher and congregation had assembled, one of the elders who did not approve of the arrangement, turned the key in the door, and went away, thus locking them all in. Providentially, however, a ladder happened to be in the house, by means of which all got out through a window in safety, one of the brethren remarking that he had been confined once for Satan, but he blessed God for being confined this day for Jesus.

During this year a young lady was united in marriage to Mr. C. Read of Monage, in the County of Monaghan. She was the daughter of the Rev. George Jones, rector of Aghnamullen ; and was accustomed to accompany her mother to the Methodist services, and to meet the preachers in her father's house. Having been thus led to give her heart to the Lord, on going to a home of her own she at once invited the servants of God to preach there ; large numbers attended, a class was formed, and many were led to the

Saviour. The house thus became, for many years, a centre of religious light and blessing to all the neighbourhood.*

On Christmas day, the usual early morning service was held in the old barrack at Coleraine, but the storm was so severe, that the congregation could scarcely hear the preacher. At the close of the service some naturally lamented the severity of the weather, but Mr. Stephen Douthett remarked, "Well, friends, we do not know what good that storm may be doing for us."† The words were almost prophetic of what it appeared subsequently really occurred. A large army and fleet had been sent from France to Ireland, and on this very day, the remnant of the invading force lay tossing about in Bantry bay, in utter despair of effecting a landing, with but faint hope of ever getting back to Brest in safety, and all this without human intervention. The terrible storm that raged, scattered and discomfited them. "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say; if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul."

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1840, pp. 428-31.

† Unpublished Journal of John Galt.

CHAPTER IX.

1797.

THE failure of the French expedition to Bantry bay, did not discourage the disaffected and rebellious; on the contrary, it seemed to convince them of the facility with which Ireland might be invaded, and of the determination of France to afford them every assistance. They thus became bolder and more confident. The arming and drilling were carried on with more activity than ever, and numerous attempts made to seduce the soldiers from their allegiance. So far from there being any cessation in the ravages of the insurgents who overran the country, they increased in number and destructiveness. While in the north, the spirit of disloyalty spread so extensively, and secret societies became so active that concealment was impossible, and it was found necessary to employ against them the extraordinary powers at the disposal of the Government. Numerous arrests took place, which while stimulating the revolutionists to more violent measures, at times afforded the Methodist itinerants new and favourable opportunities of Christian usefulness.

Early in 1797, Mr. Ouseley removed from Dunmore to Ballymote, where so many Romanists thronged to hear him that the priest became alarmed, and compelled a number of these poor people to walk through the streets, bare-headed and bare-footed, as public spectacles, and then made them kneel down and ask his pardon and God's, for having listened to the Methodist. Ouseley made the town a centre from which he engaged in evangelistic labours, such as he had long pursued, and which he pushed so far that he was put into the black hole of Sligo, for disturbing the place by preaching. Nothing daunted, however, he continued his earnest work. Not only in the five counties of Connaught,

but in several towns in Leinster and a few in Ulster, he made his appearance on horseback, the people wondering who he was, and feeling as if a voice from the unknown had reached them, and brought strange tidings to their ears. In fair or market, at burial or patron, he took his stand, and cried aloud. He also succeeded in gaining access to the jails, visiting both the debtors and criminals. At Roscommon he preached Christ to a convict sentenced to death, who heard at first with sullen and stupid disregard, but after some time, looking up with a feeling of astonishment, inquired, "Are you an angel or a man; or who, or what are you?" Mr. Ouseley prayed with him, and when taking his leave, the man entreated him to come again, and also to visit a fellow-convict, like himself, sentenced to death for some crime connected with what were called the "Threshers." The first of these two men was savingly converted, and expressed an earnest wish to have Mr. Ouseley with him at the time of execution; but this the missionary was not able to comply with, having promised to visit others in Carrick-on-Shannon, condemned to die. He advised the man, however, that he should not attempt to speechify in his last moments, but continue in the spirit of prayer. This counsel was faithfully attended to, as the poor criminal did not speak, except to acknowledge the mercy of God, and urge his wife and children to attend to their eternal interests.*

In Boyle, the Society had to encounter much opposition, which would have assumed a more serious and violent form, but for the influence and sympathy of the Earl of Kingston. A small society, including several converted Roman Catholics, was formed at Elphin; opposition arose, but soon ended, as Dr. Law, the Protestant Bishop, gave it no countenance. The chief support of the cause in the town was Mr. William Laird, whose father, Mr. Glover Laird, had a large family, and brought them up in the fear of the Lord. One of his sons, Gilbert, was a pious clergyman in the Established Church; a second, James, an excellent man, entertained the preachers at Castlebar, and subsequently emigrated to the United States; and a third, Glover, resided with his mother at Carrick-on-Shannon, and was a devoted leader. One of the

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp 67 71.

daughters was married to Richard Stevens of Carrick, a local preacher; a second to Mr. Caleb Shera of Roscommon, and a third to Mr. Thomas Munns. All these received the preachers into their houses with cordial hospitality. The custom of Mr. Laird, and after his death of his widow, was to pray three times each day with the family; and their prayers were thus graciously answered. Various parts of the circuit were visited this year with an outpouring of the Spirit, so that seven new classes were formed, many sinners converted, and the people of God gave cheering evidence of growth "in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

About the middle of February, Mr. Averell entered on a tour through parts of the counties of Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Carlow, in which, with the exception of a short interval at home, he was occupied until the beginning of May. While on this excursion, a rather amusing incident occurred at Enniscorthy. There was in the Society there, an active zealous man, named Proud, who left nothing undone when the preachers were in town, to secure good congregations. In announcing from house to house that the Rev. Mr. Averell was to preach, one of the local clergy said, "It is a hoax; Averell is not a clergyman." This was mortifying to Proud, as it not only impeached his veracity, but also reflected on the Society; so he hastened to the house where Mr. Averell stopped, and rushing unceremoniously into the room, where he and the family, with some friends were at dinner, abruptly said, "Sir, Mr. H—— says you are no clergyman." Proud's sudden appearance and earnest words excited no little surprise and amusement, while Mr. Averell replied, "Well, Tom, when you see Mr. H—— give him my compliments, and tell him 'tis strange if I am no clergyman, for it was I who married him." Proud withdrew as hastily as he had entered, set off without delay for the house of the clergyman, and was informed that he was at dinner; but nothing daunted, opened the dining-room door, and putting in his head, delivered his message. Mrs. H—— at once inquired of her husband if he had really said this. "Oh, yes," he replied, "I did say it in jest;" and addressing Tom, added, "Give my compliments to Mr. Averell, and tell him I consider him as much a clergyman as I am myself." Tom promptly disappeared, proud that he had made

his point good, and that Mr. Averell's ecclesiastical status could never again be questioned.

On March 29th, Dr. Coke arrived at Donaghadee, and found the country severely disturbed with political agitation. Those fatal days were drawing near, in which the busy work of rebels and traitors was about to produce its harvest of bloodshed and ruin. In most of the towns martial law was already in force. "The whole province of Ulster," says he, "is in violent agitation, and seems preparing for some astonishing blow. I should not be surprised, unless God be pleased to defeat the designs of the wicked, if a second general massacre take place in Ireland." In the midst of these troubled scenes, the doctor moved among the people as an angel of peace. He preached continually, and had much sacred intercourse with the people of God, who needed all the consolation he could give them.

At Belfast, he had, during the week he spent in the town, the use of the first Presbyterian meeting-house, Rosemary street; and the congregations were much larger than formerly. On the Sunday evening, the house was crowded, and he felt great liberty in preaching, especially in addressing backsliders. Suddenly a sergeant in the army, who had formerly enjoyed the love of God, but had grievously fallen, rose up and spoke, giving glory to God for his restoration; and thus producing a deep impression. It appeared that during the sermon the Lord had not only convinced him of the error of his ways, but revealed Himself in pardoning mercy, and so filled him with Divine love that he was irresistibly drawn to bear a public testimony to the goodness of God. Such, however, was the evil disposition of some persons that they circulated the slanderous report that the doctor had bribed the soldier to speak at the time, and in the manner he had done.

At Lisburn also, Dr. Coke was favoured with the use of the large meeting-house, and greatly enjoyed seeing again Mr. and Mrs. John Johnson, whom he pronounces "pillars in the Church of God." He remained three days at Coleraine. One day at breakfast, and another at tea, upwards of one hundred of the Society met him in the old barrack, when he was deeply impressed with their singing. On one of these occasions he held the first missionary meeting in the town, at which he acted at once as

chairman and deputation, and, surrounded by a deeply interested audience, discoursed on his favourite theme.*

At Newtownlimavady, there were several inattentive hearers, until he spoke so plainly on the necessity of being born again, that they were constrained to listen. After preaching he had a precious season with the Society at the Lord's supper. At Londonderry, services were held in the large meeting-house, which was filled with people of all classes, including many Romanists; and in the chapel, where the congregation listened with deep attention, and every word seemed to distil as dew in their hearts. At Newtownstewart, he found himself in the midst of a zealous people, whose hearty responses greatly cheered him. At Dungannon, where he was the guest of Mr. J. Heather, there was a large congregation in the Presbyterian meeting-house. At Charlemont, he says he had many blessings, and always good audiences. The Armagh circuit he found in a very flourishing condition, the Lord having poured out His Spirit on many parts of it, and no less than eleven new societies having been formed during the year. At Tanderagee, he preached near the chapel to a very large congregation, and after the service paid a visit to the Rev. Dr. Leslie, now eighty years of age, and much beloved alike by rich and poor.

At Warrenpoint, Dr. Coke preached in the little chapel erected at the seaside about four years previously, and found a loving society there. At Newry, he remained two days, and discoursed in the large meeting-house, the minister of which treated him with the greatest kindness; but the town was rent and torn by faction and insurrection, most cruel acts of barbarity being daily perpetrated. After a ride of thirty miles, he arrived at Cootehill, where the service was held in the meeting-house, the new chapel not being large enough for the congregation. Before preaching he gave out two favourite hymns, suitable to the subject on which he intended to preach; but the people could raise no tune to either of them, which induced him to change his text, in which he afterwards saw the hand of God, as the sermon was made a special blessing to the congregation. Thence he went to Cavan, "a poor dead place;" however, the people were attentive.

* Unpublished Journal of J. Galt.

A Sunday was spent in Clones, where he was often favoured with special blessings from the Lord. At Brookeborough, he preached in the yard of Mr. M'Carthy, to a large congregation, and the word was accompanied with gracious power. At Enniskillen, where he was the first itinerant suffered to preach peaceably out of doors, there was in the little chapel a good audience, chiefly made up of the members of neighbouring Societies. At Annadale, he remained for two days, preaching each day; but alas, "the Queen of the Dale" was gone!

About the middle of June, in the midst of these self-denying labours, the doctor's health gave way, so that he was obliged to give up. He therefore sent a copy of his intended route, with a request to take his place, to Mr. Averell, who at once consented, and was thus occupied until Conference. During this period he visited the Athlone, Longford, and Drogheda circuits. Most of the country through which he passed had been put under martial law, and almost every day he witnessed its sad effects. On every hand were to be seen houses on fire, and the ruins of those that had been consumed; or military tribunals, in their summary way, disposing of human life, while many places were stained with the blood of those whom they had executed. This was an appalling state of things,—a desperate remedy for a still more desperate evil. In Tullamore, the evangelist himself was called upon to endure unwarranted opposition. While preaching in the ball-room on "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's," some who were present listened quietly while he enforced allegiance to the King, but became turbulent when he urged the claims of the King of kings. One man rudely told the servant of God to hold his tongue, and his example was followed by a military officer present. Much noise and confusion then took place, and a hymn was given out, in singing which most of the congregation joined, and the malcontents withdrew in a rage. Mr. Averell now resumed his discourse, but had not proceeded far, when a sergeant entered the room, and delivered a command to disperse, which had to be obeyed. Soon afterwards a peremptory order not to attempt to preach again in the town was sent to the servant of God, to which he replied by letter, earnestly requesting a hearing; but was told in reply the punishment that would be inflicted if he

disobeyed. And as if this were not enough, it was confirmed by three military officers rudely entering his room at midnight, after he had retired to rest, and personally threatening him with the consequences of daring to disregard their authority.

This, however, was the only place during the tour, where he met with any obstruction from the exercise of despotic power, unduly assumed, under the sanction of martial law. Everywhere else he had peaceable audiences, and on several occasions, owing to the crowds that attended his ministry, had to preach in the open air; while the Lord in many instances gave him to see fruit to his labours. He notices several places where, amidst the turbulence of the times, the cause of God greatly prospered. Thus, speaking of Athlone, he says, there was on the circuit "a deep and spreading work of grace, accompanied with much life and power."

The Conference met on July the 7th, with Dr. Coke as president, and Mr. Crook as secretary. Three candidates were received on trial: Archibald Campbell of Newtownstewart, Thomas Johnson of Coleraine, and James Carter. Lawrence Kane, jun., who had travelled for two years, retired from the itinerancy, and settled in Cork, where, to support his aged parents, he opened an academy, and continued heartily identified with the Society. There was an increase in the membership of two hundred and forty-two. The meeting of the brethren was indeed a blessed one; and was especially remarkable for great harmony of spirit. Difference of opinion seemed swallowed up in the deep interest felt in the cause all had at heart: the sad calamities of the country leading them nearer to God, the Centre of unity, and thus to one another. With regard to these trials it is said in the Address to the British Conference, "The troubles of our land, as you in part have been informed, have been inexpressibly great. No one can have an adequate idea of them, but those in their midst. The confusion of things, the loss of trade, and a variety of other distressing circumstances, have rendered our people in general unable to assist the work of God in temporal respects, as they were accustomed to do. But at the same time, we cannot help observing, that our souls are filled with gratitude to God, who in the midst of the greatest dangers and difficulties has preserved us, so that not one of us received the least injury through the year."

During the session of the Conference, Dr. Coke intimated the great probability that, from an engagement he had entered into with the American Church, he should not have the happiness of meeting the members again. In preaching also he touched on the same topic; and it moved him greatly to observe the painful effect this disclosure had upon the feelings of many of his hearers, who "sorrowed," like the friends of the apostle of the Gentiles, "for the words which he spake, that they would see his face no more." Among the preachers, this trouble was very apparent. He had not known the strength of their affection for him, nor they themselves till then. It was thus the thought of separation awakened feelings that made him waver in his resolve, and finally consent to abandon it.

In August, the following interesting conversions took place in Coleraine. The Kerry militia, who had been quartered in the town, were removed, leaving behind them Sergeant-major Mortimer, seriously ill. He was visited by several members of the Society, and through the Divine blessing on their labours led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross, so that in death he rejoiced in God his Saviour. A service was conducted by the Methodists in connection with the funeral, at which the officer who had charge of the military in attendance, was so deeply impressed that he subsequently attended the public services, was converted, and became a useful member of the Society. So far was his piety from retarding his promotion that shortly afterwards he was raised to the rank of captain.*

A young local preacher on this circuit, having been requested to preach at Garvagh, where there was an earnest and devoted society of about thirty persons, appointed a day, and prepared a fine discourse, which he thought would make a great impression. But when the time came, and he announced his text, he could not remember a single idea. "The net which he had so cunningly prepared, and thought was perfect, proved a tangled hank, without beginning, end, or middle." Deeply humbled, he sought Divine help, and not in vain. The Lord gave suitable thoughts and words, and accompanied them with power, so that the house seemed filled with the glory of God. There was such a scene of

* Unpublished Journal of J. Galt.

holy excitement as the preacher had never witnessed before, and which continued until near midnight. A few weeks subsequently the love-feast was held; and as the house could not contain the congregation, application was made to the rector for the use of the church, which he refused. But a local magistrate, who kept the keys, being of another mind, said, "God forbid, that I should prevent His word from being preached;" and ordered the door to be thrown open. Thus the public service was held in the church; and the Society then adjourned to the usual preaching place for the after service, at which the Lord gave His abundant blessing.

While at this period there was in Dromore a feeble struggling cause, the good work extended into the surrounding country. A wild young man, named James Hamilton of Ballykeel, was visited by his aunt, a Mrs. Manown of Ballywarren, near Downpatrick, who was a Methodist, and through the Divine blessing on her influence, he was converted. The preachers were then invited to his house, and a class formed, of which he was appointed the leader—an office which he sustained until about sixty years subsequently, when he was called hence to the Church above. One of the first to become a member of this class was a young man named Samuel M'Dowell, who lived at Drumaknockan. He was soon afterwards appointed a leader and local preacher, and laboured with considerable success in Dromore and the adjoining country until, in 1808, he went to Newfoundland as a missionary. He was a man of much ability, strict integrity, and great diffidence, and was respected and beloved by all classes.

There was at this time a blessed work of God at the Bannfoot, during which many were converted and joined the Society. This was chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Joseph Armstrong, who had charge of the Tanderagee circuit. A good man named John Gough, who came to the neighbourhood from Dublin, also made himself very useful. Amongst others brought into connection with the Methodists were Mr. and Mrs. Addy and their son Edward. Mrs. Addy was the first in the family converted, and the change in her life was so marked that her husband, though determined not to be a Methodist, was led to desire earnestly the blessings she enjoyed. At length he was invited to a love-feast at Scotch street, where the simple accounts given by John Gough,

and others, of what the Lord had done for their souls, made a profound impression on his mind. At the close of the service there was a penitent meeting, and several found peace with God; but Mr. Addy did not obtain the blessing until after it had ended. On his way home, he exclaimed with much feeling, "Oh, if they had only continued the meeting a little longer!" Mr. Gough said, God was not confined to the meeting, He was as present on the road where they were walking, and as willing to bless him that moment as He would be in any other place or at any other time. The blessing of the Lord accompanied the word spoken, and before the anxious inquirer reached his house, his soul was set at liberty. In a short time he was appointed a leader, in which office he continued for several years, until he died happy in God. On the conversion of his father, Edward began to meet in class, and those religious impressions were made on his mind, which in time led to his hearty decision for God. One day John Wilson, a leading Methodist in the neighbourhood, said to him, "Well, Edward, as sure as God has spoken to my heart, He has something for you to do." These words of one of the most devoted men he knew greatly impressed the youth, and proved almost prophetic of his subsequent devoted and successful career.

Youghal had been for twelve months a circuit for two preachers. In the town there were several intelligent and respectable persons connected with the Society. There were also many persons, not Methodists, in great poverty and want, whose circumstances were brought before the above friends; subscriptions were proposed, visitors appointed, and a system of benevolent efforts put into operation by which much good was effected. Most deplorable cases of wretchedness and want were discovered and relieved; and numbers in the greatest ignorance and depravity instructed in the truths of Gospel, and led to the possession of that heavenly wisdom which is better than silver or gold. The country parts of the circuit included Castlemartyr, Middleton, Mallow, Doneraile, Charleville, Kilfinnane, Mitchells-town, Kilworth, Fermoy, Tallow, and other places, in which in general the Societies were small and poor, and those few who possessed genuine piety much scattered. At Cappoquin, the only person who entertained the preachers gave them no encou-

ragement to return, and died soon afterwards in a most unhappy state of mind.*

During the months of August and September, Mr. Averell was engaged in a tour through the counties of Carlow, Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, and Tipperary, in many parts of which he saw fruit to his labours, and in some instances gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Having spent a week at home, he again proceeded southward. In Cork, there had been a blessed awakening which commenced at the time of the threatened invasion of the French at Bantry. The chapel on the Marsh was then kept constantly open for prayer, and such was the state of alarm that multitudes flocked to it. Many who before had lived in utter neglect of God, earnestly sought His protection, and also mercy and refuge in Christ. The Christian liberality of the Bishop, the Hon. T. Stopford, in granting the use of the French church to the Society, also contributed not a little to the success of the cause. This tended to remove the prejudices of many against Methodism, and led them to attend the services, so that not a few were thus brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. The preachers stationed on the circuit, Messrs. Dinnen and John Stuart, were also very devoted men, much beloved by the people; and the Lord greatly acknowledged their labours. During Mr. Averell's stay in the city, he says he enjoyed a continual feast. Not only in the public services, but in all the meetings and social gatherings, God was the glory in the midst of them, and peace and joy seemed to gladden every heart.

From Cork the evangelist proceeded to Bandon, where he did not find much spiritual life. He says:—"After the warm clime of Divine love, out of which I had passed on leaving Cork, this was like the frigid zone. We had, it is true, large and attentive congregations; but I felt that I was not supported by the prayers of the people." He next visited Inishannon, "where," he remarks, "almost all the Protestants in the town came to preaching." The poor weavers of this place, a few years previously by wonderful exertions, had erected a good preaching-house, which accommodated about four hundred persons. Their love taught them all trades necessary for the building and finishing of it, which they accom-

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 63-5.

plished without entrenching much on their time for labour. Mr. Averell then proceeded to Dunmanway, where were a good many Protestants, and a commodious chapel, but great opposition to the truth. He had large congregations, chiefly composed of Scotch soldiers. Thence he went to Skibbereen, and afterwards to several country places, on his way to Baltimore. Here he met Mr. Murphy, with whom he travelled, through a wild, trackless mountain; and they at length reached their destination, Mr. G. Swanton's, the most lonely place in which they had ever before seen a human habitation. Mr. Averell preached to a congregation of ten, and as he found two of their host's daughters under conviction, he spoke on Jacob's wrestling with the Angel. Afterwards, during tea, the Lord opened the heart of one of them, Ann, to attend to the things which were spoken, and brought her into the glorious liberty of His children. The other, Susan, after a night of wrestling in prayer, was at daybreak enabled to rejoice in an assurance of the Divine favour. And in the morning, at the Sacrament, the Lord spoke peace to their mother. The evangelist proceeded thence to Bantry, where he preached to a large congregation with comfort and power.

Methodism had obtained a permanent footing in this town only about four years previously, when during a visit of one of the preachers, Mr. James Vickery was led to hear, and thus brought to seek and obtain redemption through the blood of Christ. He immediately became a member of the Society, invited the servants of God to his house, and soon afterwards was appointed a leader. As with Obadiah, the Lord blessed him. For upwards of fifty years he lived a consistent godly life, the father of Methodism in the town; and his children and grandchildren have risen to call him blessed.*

Having visited Kenmare and other places, Mr. Averell reached Mr. Marshall's of Riverville, where the Rev. Mr. Nash and a number of other friends, were invited to meet him. At the evening service there was a large congregation, including several persons of influence, and the Lord was graciously and powerfully present. Many were brought in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross, amongst whom were an officer in the yeomanry, and a

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, p. 491.

young lady who threw away her feathers and finery, and cried aloud for mercy. In Limerick, the congregations were the most respectable and crowded Mr. Averell had seen. Prejudice seemed entirely removed; and all ranks attended the services, but there was not much spiritual life among the people. There were, however, some very precious Christians in the Society, and also some blessed times of refreshing, both in the public ordinances and in social intercourse.

Mr. Averell now directed his steps homeward, in time to spend the Christmas in ministering the word of life to his own people. Before the year closed, however, he made a brief excursion to the county of Wicklow, during which he preached at Bray. Here, he says, though there was no Society, a good many attended the services, and listened with much attention. His host and hostess were steady, devoted, consistent Christians, who formerly had lived in a remote part of the country; and though then in very straitened circumstances received the preachers. A rich relative, from whom they had high expectations, threatened to deprive them of all hope of financial help from him, if they did not renounce Methodism; but they were too well grounded in religion to barter its enjoyment for earthly gain, and, therefore, regardless of the threat, pursued their righteous course. They lost nothing by their fidelity; for on the death of their relative, all his property, amounting to about five hundred pounds per annum, came to them; and the sudden rise of this worthy couple to affluence did not lower the tone of their piety. They retained their Christian simplicity, and walked humbly with their God.

On the evening of the last day of the year Mr. Averell preached in Whitefriar street chapel, Dublin, to a crowded congregation. A love-feast followed, which proved, indeed, a feast of love: the heavenly fire burned in many hearts, and those who gave a reason for the hope that was in them, spake as they only could speak, who had deep experience of the things of God. Afterwards a large party assembled at Mr. Arthur Keene's, where they closed the old year, and entered upon the new, in solemn dedication of themselves to the service of God, who testified His acceptance of their offering by a renewed manifestation of Himself to their waiting souls.

CHAPTER X.

1798.

ON January 1st, 1798, there was a public breakfast in Whitefriar street chapel, provided by the stewards of the Society. This appears to have been the first meeting of the kind in Ireland, and became a regular institution in Dublin. A statement of the accounts for the preceding year was read, from which it appeared that about one thousand pounds had been subscribed by Methodists in the city for various religious and charitable purposes. At the close of the financial business, there was religious conversation, with singing and prayer, during which the glory of God filled the house. So very extraordinary was this manifestation of the Divine presence, that there was a deep and general impression that the year would be a time memorable for either religious prosperity, or severe trials and afflictions.

Having spent the first fortnight of the year in Dublin, Mr. Averell set out on a tour to the north, which occupied three months. The first places on his plan were Drogheda, Dundalk, Newry, and the Rev. Mr. Tighe's, near Rathfryland, in all of which he sowed the seed of life with hope of fruit. At Downpatrick, the congregations were small, although there was a good society, and more of the life and power of religion than in many places where the audiences were larger. At Lisburn, a great many were present at the service. At Belfast, where the people had much spiritual life, he preached to a crowded congregation, and administered the Lord's supper. At Lambeg, there was a large number of earnest worshippers, and the Lord gave ample proof that it is no vain thing to wait on Him. About two hundred remained to commemorate the death of Christ. At Moira, there was a considerable attendance in the market-house. At Mr. Boyce's of Strawhall, there was a great crowd at the

service, and the Lord accompanied the word with power to the hearts of the people. On the Tanderagee circuit, where it appeared there were no less than eleven local preachers, regularly engaged in sowing the seed of eternal life, the congregations were large, and God greatly owned the labours of His servant. In this country, and throughout the north in general, the Methodist preachers and services were much esteemed by people of all denominations, even by many who differed widely from them in religious views.

Mr. Averell spent nearly a week among the affectionate and devoted Methodists of Coleraine, with unspeakable comfort to his own soul, and much profit to them. At Londonderry, in church, scarcely a word could be heard on account of the noise of martial music, as the troops marched and countermarched all the time of service. Nor was it by the military alone the Lord's day was thus dishonoured: the inhabitants generally seemed to be hardened in transgression; yet the congregations were large, and there were a few resolved to be on the Lord's side. At Newtownstewart, Mr. Averell preached to a numerous audience, "the plainest in dress, and the most Christ-like in their deportment" that he had met with. At Enniskillen, he had crowded congregations, chiefly consisting of people from the surrounding country, where the work had made blessed progress, but the town itself seemed to be proof against the Gospel. At Violet Hill, he preached to about six hundred attentive hearers. At Lisbellaw, in the house of Mr. Copeland, there was "a sweet, loving people, full of religious life and zeal for God." At Maguiresbridge, where were many truly devoted Christians, Mr. Averell discoursed in the Presbyterian meeting-house, to a crowded congregation, many being unable to obtain admission.

At Manorhamilton, there was a large audience of loving people; and on the following morning about four hundred were present, who appeared to be the most solemnly affected hearers he had met with in the course of this tour. On the same day, he preached in the court-house, Sligo, to about seven hundred persons; and on the day following, in a mill at Ballymote, to upwards of three hundred, with about eighty of whom he commemorated the death of Christ. At Foxford, he was delighted to see a lively and increasing cause. At Castlebar, conformity

to the world and the spirit of the times had well-nigh destroyed the Society; yet he had large and attentive congregations, to whom he preached strongly against "sinful dress and worldly politics." At Newport, where he was the guest of the Rev. Mr. Herne, he had the joy of seeing some souls brought to God. At Westport, he met Mr. George Brown, with whom he enjoyed sweet fellowship, and, after preaching, held a love-feast, at which there was a blessed outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and great was their rejoicing. They then rode twenty miles through incessant wind and rain to Hollymount, where they soon forgot the hardships of their journey. Here they remained two days, preached four times, held a love-feast and sacramental service, and had the satisfaction of seeing several brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Mr. Averell then went on to Tuam, where he spent a happy day with the Rev. Mr. Murray, a pious clergyman; and in the evening preached to a large audience, to many of whom the Lord applied His own truth. At Dunmore, there was in the barrack, a well-conducted congregation of soldiers. At Aughrim, the Society was much alive to God, and though in the midst of alarms, made steady progress in the way of holiness. Easter Sunday was one of great labour, but rendered memorable by signal manifestations of Divine goodness. In the morning, at the meeting of the classes and the preaching service, at noon in the church and at the Lord's table, at preaching in the evening, and especially at the love-feast, the Lord was as the dew unto His people, and they heartily magnified His name. At Birr, there was the largest and most attentive congregation Mr. Averell had seen in the town; and on April 13th he returned to his home, to find that it had been ransacked by rebels, who had forced the door, destroyed the furniture, and stolen large quantities of lead and ash-trees, for bullets and pike handles.

Meanwhile, the country became more tranquil, and for some time wore so favourable an aspect that many were confident the turbulence of the people would subside. It was, however, only a temporary calm, during which the elements gathered strength for the terrific storm which was about to burst in devastating fury, scattering death in countless and appalling forms. The various seditious combinations, which had long assumed a threatening aspect, at length disclosed their designs by uniting, and

plunging into open and outrageous rebellion. The conspiracy, which was widespread, and carefully ramified, aimed at separation from Great Britain, and the formation of an Irish republic. While the majority of the rebels were Romanists, numbers who professed Protestantism were drawn into the plot, and became implicated in the dark doings which for a while prevailed.

Very few indeed of the Methodists, however, were led to swerve from their allegiance to lawful authority, and in these isolated cases discipline was at once executed in their expulsion from the Society. A large number of the members promptly joined the Royal army, and did their duty to their country as men who feared God and honoured the King. It was a Methodist leader in Dublin who, the night before the rebellion broke out, gave the alarm. It appears that his brother, one of the United Irishmen, entreated him, with his wife and children, to leave the city at once, without assigning any reason for this extraordinary request, which the leader persisted in refusing. When alone, however, he reflected on the earnestness of his brother's importunity, and the air of mystery with which it was surrounded, which excited his suspicions. Apprehending danger, he went at once to the Provost-marshal, and informed him of what had taken place; and he in turn laid the circumstances before the Lord Lieutenant, who for some time had anticipated a rising. Confirmation having evidently come from another quarter, the castle guns were fired, drums beat to arms, and at eleven o'clock that night, an army of regulars and volunteers, under Lord Roden, marched from the city. Only three miles from Dublin, they met the rebels approaching the metropolis in full force. A conflict ensued, and the insurgents were defeated. Meanwhile a message was sent to the officer who commanded the yeomanry at Rathfarnham, informing him of danger, with orders to be prepared. The rebels, who advanced here toward the city from the south, were thus unexpectedly opposed, and took to flight.

Dublin was now safe, but intelligence arrived from every side that the rebellion had broken out, and that the south especially was overrun by troops of insurgents. At Kilbeggan, a small party of yeomanry, many of whom were Methodists, met a rebel army approaching to burn the town. The volunteers were led by Mr. Handy of Brackagh Castle, who with his sons

fought in the bravest manner, and having repulsed the insurgents with considerable loss, gained a complete victory.

At Monasterevin, a priest who had been taken prisoner, stated that a rebel force of from thirteen to fifteen hundred was about to attack the town. Here there was a corps of yeomanry and another of infantry, consisting in all of only eighty soldiers. Of these ten were pious young men belonging to the Society, who had been deprived of their arms, for declining to join in military exercises on the Sabbath, which they considered unnecessary. But on making an offer of their services, when danger arose, they were accepted, placed under the direction of a steady, religious sergeant, named Johnston, and told with an oath they would be stationed where their courage would be tried. Mr. Averell happened to be in the town, and proposed, as they might never have another opportunity, that they should have a religious service; which having been announced, a large congregation assembled. They had a deeply solemn and affecting time in waiting upon the Lord. Sergeant Johnston and his men attended, but kept at the door with fixed bayonets ready at any moment to respond to the call of duty. There was, however, no interruption, and the audience separated with the sad consciousness that they might meet no more in this world.

Early on the following morning one of the videttes galloped into town with the intelligence that the rebels were approaching, and soon the conflict raged. Mr. Averell with his host, Mr. Fox, and the family, continued for about an hour and a half in prayer, whilst the din of battle reverberated through the house. At length one of the servants opened a window-shutter to look out, and exclaimed, "The battle's over! I see a yeoman throwing up his cap in the air." Great anxiety was felt for Mrs. Downes, a Methodist, who kept a boarding-school, and whose house was beside the scene of strife; but she and her pupils were soon seen approaching, escorted by Johnston and his men, safe and well. And all joined in heartily praising God for His gracious deliverance and merciful care.

It appeared that at the close of the service on the previous evening, Sergeant Johnston and his men went to the commanding officer, who, after giving them much abuse, told them to take their post on the bridge, and prevent the rebels from entering the

town. Knowing that it was in that direction the insurgents were expected, the little band promptly and bravely took the perilous position, and spent the night in prayerful and courageous solicitude. At about five o'clock on the following morning a dense fog descended, obscuring every object; soon a confused noise was heard approaching, with the hum of many voices, and then a vast multitude rushed towards the bridge. Johnston and his party received them with dauntless resolution, firing volley after volley in rapid succession, until the rebels came to a stand-still, little aware of the small force by which they were withstood. When the fog arose, the insurgents were in complete confusion. By this time the commanding officer, having heard the roll of musketry, came up with all his forces, the enemy rallied, and the conflict continued with great obstinacy. At length the well-directed fire of the infantry compelled their assailants to fall back, and then the cavalry, taking advantage of the confusion, charged, killing and wounding many, and scattering the rest in all directions. So mercifully did the Lord interpose in answer to prayer.

In connection with this attack should be noticed the remarkable deliverance of William Gosselin, Esq., of the Abbey, County Longford, a highly respected member of the Methodist Society. He was at this time an officer in the Monasterevin yeomanry, and, being a man of great courage, volunteered on the day before the battle to carry a despatch to Portarlinton; but had not proceeded far when he was seized by the rebels, and sentenced to be shot. Just as the sentence was about to be executed, a woman, who had been a servant in his house, recognised him, and rushing between him and those who were about to put him to death, declared she would suffer herself to be shot before he should be injured. Thus his life was spared, and he was confined in a small cabin under a strong guard during the night. While in custody the rebels pressed him to become their commander; but this, of course, he refused. After the defeat of the insurgents, they were pursued in various directions, and a party of them coming to where he was confined, asked what he would advise them to do. He, with a frankness for which he was remarkable, replied, "Well, boys, since you ask my advice, I will give it; throw away your pikes, and take to the bogs, where the cavalry cannot follow you."

This counsel was at once taken; and Mr. Gosselin, having obtained his liberty, joined his comrades, and returned with them, to the great joy of his family, who had given him up for lost.

At Prosperous, the rebels having surprised and butchered the garrison, treason was more successful. As the insurgents passed along the street, spreading death and destruction in every direction, Mr. William Norris, a Methodist, was in an upper room of his house, commending himself to the protection of God in prayer, when suddenly there was a great noise and contention below. On breaking open the door, one of the ringleaders, instead of rushing up-stairs to take the life of the good man as he had purposed, placed his pike across the threshold, and swore that before any man touched Norris, he should pass over his body. The murderous gang were bent on slaughter, but the man was firm; so they moved on with wild threats, while their leader remained as a lifeguard to the servant of God, whom he urged at the peril of life to quit the town, directing him to a way of safety, and then proceeding onward in his work of destruction. Such was the almost miraculous preservation of a son of one of Wesley's greatest friends. Mr. Norris returned to England, was useful as an official of the Society, maintained his integrity, and in 1822 passed in triumph to the home above.*

The spirit of rebellion now roused to fury by hatred to Saxon rule, thirst for Protestant blood, and desire for Popish domination, raged with dreadful violence over the country. The counties of Kildare, Wicklow, and Carlow, were the chief scenes of the frightful horrors of the day. It was not the rebel army in the battle field that was appalling; there they were generally defeated with great slaughter; but the horrid barbarity with which the defenceless were treated in remote parts of the country, men, women, and children being alike its victims. Nor was this savage ferocity manifested only by men; the wives and daughters of the insurgents, lost to every feeling of humanity, not only prompted the men to deeds of blood, but were themselves, in numberless instances, active in the work of extermination. Hence the utmost consternation prevailed, and most frightful appre-

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1823, p. 64.

hensions were entertained by loyalists in unprotected country places. No Protestant could confide in his most intimate acquaintance of the Romish party, believing that they were all alike intent on the extirpation of those whom they considered heretics. Nor was this mistrust without reason, for many of those who fell victims to Popish fury, found their neighbours, with whom they had lived on terms of intimacy and friendship, to be their most relentless enemies. Most of the Protestants, therefore, took up arms, and with their families sought refuge in the neighbouring towns and villages, where they fortified themselves as well as they could, and thus left those who could not remove, still more exposed to the cruelty of their enemies. At Tentower, however, Mr. Averell advised the Protestants to remain at home, and put their trust in God, which they did, and also assembled each night to unite in praising the Lord for His goodness, and seek in prayer His mercy and continued protection.

At Castlecomer, while Mr. Zechariah Worrell was in an upper room filled with people, two rebels got on the roof and set the house on fire. A scene of wild disorder ensued, during which screams of terror, mingled with earnest entreaties for Divine help; and when it was discovered that the lower part of the building was secure, the unfortunate inmates feared to descend, lest having escaped the fire, they should suffer even more terribly from the fury of their foes. At length all escaped, notwithstanding a shower of bullets. The men who had planned this diabolical outrage, had the audacity subsequently to fire on a party of soldiers, some of whom soon rushed into the house, and shot the wretched miscreants dead.

As the violence of the insurrection seemed to abate in the districts where it had first appeared, it suddenly burst out with redoubled force in the county where it was least expected. Amid all the commotion in Wexford, on the day of the outbreak, the usual Methodist service was held in the town; and the word of the Lord was sweet and consolatory to the little flock who were never all to meet again on earth. While Mr. Andrew Taylor preached from the words of the Psalmist, "In the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast," a solemn awe rested on the congregation, and every face was bedewed with tears; but that perfect love which casteth

out all fear caused them to triumph, and they left the place of meeting ready, if it were God's will, to go to prison or death for the sake of their Redeemer.

During the succeeding four weeks, the most terrible atrocities were perpetrated; infuriated priests instigated the mobs; Protestants were piked, their houses burned, and their farms devastated; and thousands of armed ruffians marched to and fro through the country desolating it with fire and sword. Methodists were of course objects of special malignity, being noted for their loyalty; their Societies were thrown into general confusion, their families scattered, and their preachers, travelling and local, hunted and imprisoned; but the Lord mercifully interposed on behalf of many of His suffering people.

At Enniscorthy, there was a poor but pious widow, named M'Loughlin, in whose house the services were held, and who was the first, and for some years the only person to receive the preachers. When the rebels became masters of the town, her house, with many others, was set on fire. Being ill of fever, and confined to bed, she was not aware of her danger until informed by a friend, through whose assistance she was wrapped in a blanket, carried into the street, and placed opposite her own door. While here a rebel seized her blanket, and thus deprived her of covering. In a very enfeebled state, she sought admittance to several houses, but every door was closed against her, even the accommodation of a shed being refused; at length she obtained a blanket, scrambled outside the town, and slept in the open air. Her days subsequently were spent in the streets, and her nights in the fields, dependent upon charity for support, until the town was retaken by the Royal army. On that eventful day she was exposed to imminent danger, but escaped without injury, by getting under an arch of the bridge, where she continued in safety until the insurgents were completely routed.

Mr. Andrew Taylor was seized by the rebels, cast into jail, and awaited his turn to be brought out and piked; five or six times he was liberated by a captain, who, impressed by his Christian bearing, thought to save his life; but the itinerant was as often seized again and thrown back into prison. On one of these occasions, a pikeman, with murderous look and attitude, inquired, "Who are you?" "I am," said Taylor, "a Methodist preacher."

"Aye," replied the rebel, "you wouldn't tell a lie," and turned away, leaving the servant of God unmolested.

Mr. George Taylor, a local preacher, was captured by the insurgents, taken to Gorey, and lodged with other prisoners in the market-house. During his detention here, which continued for a week, he suffered every insult and indignity, which the ingenuity of his merciless captors could devise. He was mocked, ridiculed, threatened, plundered of his clothes, and in hourly dread for his life. His food was of the worst description, and so scantily supplied, that hunger and thirst were added to other privations; his bed was of straw, worn almost to dust, and loathsome with vermin. But that which he felt most deeply was the state of mental exercise in which he was kept by the unceasing endeavours of his adversaries to draw him from the faith. Against those powerful and crafty temptations, Mr. Taylor found a strong and sure support in the grace which his heavenly Father imparted in answer to earnest prayer. Strength proportioned to his day was given, so that "in all these things, he was more than conqueror through Him that loved him." "I thought," he says, "of the martyrs of old, and prayed for their faith, love, and zeal, that like them I might be able to resist even unto blood. I bless His holy name, He granted my desire, and I felt strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

One day while a prisoner, the rebels, exasperated by their defeat at New Ross, brought him and his fellow captives to the top of Gorey hill, determined to wreak their vengeance on them; and were only prevented from executing their bloody purpose by the timely arrival of a message from the commander-in-chief strictly forbidding all unauthorized executions under penalty of death. Thus disappointed of their prey, their fury knew no bounds; they could scarcely be restrained from falling on their poor prisoners, and even as it was sought to gratify their thirst for blood by insidiously stabbing and piking them, as they returned to jail. Mr. Taylor thus received a severe wound, the mark of which he carried to the grave. "Blessed be God," he writes, "I can say that during the whole of this trying time my mind was stayed upon Him, and at peace with all mankind." In the prison he prayed at night with his fellow-sufferers, and exhorted them to trust in God. The Romish guard were affected by his

piety, treated him with kindness, and when the hair of the prisoners was cut off and pitched caps put on, spared him this indignity, though it was imposed on an Episcopal clergyman, who became insane from the sufferings he endured.

Taylor was offered liberty, if he would join the rebel army, but he sternly refused; and was therefore punished for his loyalty by being sent to Wexford jail. He had not been long there, when William Gurley, another Methodist prisoner, recognised him; and they wept and prayed together. The friends, however, were soon separated, Taylor being taken to the market-house, where he remained in strict confinement for upwards of a week. Here he fearlessly and faithfully confessed Christ, whenever an opportunity occurred, and suffered much both in body and mind, as he was marked for special insult and annoyance on account of his steady and devoted Protestantism.

In Wexford there was at least one Methodist martyr, James Clarke, a man of deep and consistent piety. The morning on which he suffered death, he was much cast down, and said to Andrew Taylor he feared he would not be able to endure the trial; but while they united in prayer, the Lord graciously strengthened His servant, banished all his fears, and prepared him to meet death with Christian courage. About an hour later the summons came; he went forth joyfully to encounter the last enemy; and as he walked to the bridge, where he was about to be murdered, joyfully sang praises to God. The guard ordered him to stop; but he calmly replied, that he would praise God while he had breath, and sang on. Then, denouncing him as a swaddling heretic, the rebels thrust their pikes through his body, and cast it into the river, while his spirit passed in triumph to the Church above.

Meanwhile, Andrew Taylor and Gurley continued to meet their fellow-prisoners for prayer. The number of Protestants taken out from time to time for execution, caused these services, morning, noon, and evening, to be thronged; Divine power attended them, and several were enabled to believe with a heart unto righteousness. At length, Gurley and George Taylor, having been led forth with others to be killed, were received by companies of insurgents, armed with bloody pikes, who shouted "Here comes Gurley, the heretic! Pike him! Pike the heretic

dog!" "Here comes the swaddling preacher! Pike him!"* They heard their doom with the spirit of martyrs. "I felt," says Gurley, "the moment the ruffian's hand was laid on my neck, the power of God come on my soul, and I was filled with unutterable joy. I had no doubt but that in a few minutes I should be with Jesus in Paradise." The prisoners were conducted with curses and yells to the bridge, and placed on their knees in a row to await their fate. Some they pierced in places not mortal, to prolong and increase their torture; others they raised aloft on their pikes; and, while the victims writhed in agony, the murderers exulted with savage joy. "They piked six in the most horrid manner," says Taylor, "and threw them over the bridge. One man in his torture jumped into the river, where they shot him. While these were tortured, I thought surely I shall be one of the next, as there was only one between me and death, when the Lord appeared on our behalf." This marvellous interposition came from a most unexpected quarter. A priest, arriving at the place of execution, ordered the murderers to desist, and, when commands and entreaties failed to move the hard-hearted wretches, had recourse to prayer. Then they consented to spare the surviving prisoners a little longer. On the following day the decisive battle of Vinegar Hill effectually crushed the insurrection in this county; and the victorious army marched immediately to Wexford, and liberated all the prisoners. The prayers of the servants of God having been thus blessedly answered, they were not unmindful of the duty of thanksgiving. A few of the most serious, including Messrs. Andrew and George Taylor, assembled in the house of Mr. Gurley, joined in singing the familiar hymn beginning, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath;" and then on bended knee gratefully acknowledged the boundless mercy of God in their deliverance.

Two other circumstances in connection with the history of the rebellion in Wexford must not be omitted. One was the important service rendered by Methodists to the cause of lawful authority. At the memorable and sanguinary battle of New Ross, Mr. Michael M'Cormick of that town rendered invaluable aid. He had been a quartermaster in the 2nd Dragoons, but was

* The rebels mistook George for Andrew Taylor.

now engaged in business. On this occasion, a host of twenty thousand rebels attacked the town, and after a desperate and protracted conflict were repulsed. During the action M'Cormick displayed such constant vigilance and heroic courage as called forth the thanks of the General in command, to whom he acted as aide-de-camp, and procured for his name a conspicuous place in the records of that day.

Terrible as was the blow given by the rebellion to Protestantism in this county, one good came out of it, at least so far as Methodism was concerned,—a Roman Catholic chapel was turned into a Wesleyan preaching-house. One of the leaders in the insurrection was the notorious Murphy, parish priest of Ballycanew. He was one of the worst of men, a most active and successful agent in the terrible scenes which disgraced this memorable period, and a terror throughout the entire county. His chapel was subsequently handed over to the Methodists, by the Earl of Mountnorris, the lord of the soil, and from the spot where the altar once stood, many of the itinerants preached the Gospel of life and peace, which proved the power of God to the salvation of hundreds.

The north of Ireland, contrary to what might have been expected, remained for some little time after the rebellion had broken out, in comparative tranquillity. It was there that the organization of the United Irishmen had first taken root; but as the day fixed for the rising approached, the leaders became apprehensive and undecided, and many turned informers. When the insurrection commenced in Ulster, it did not assume a very formidable character, and after two or three engagements its chief strength was crushed. A spirit of rebellion and lawlessness, however, was abroad, that burst forth here and there in deeds of outrage and blood, so that loyalists were compelled to resort to arms for the defence of life and property. Many of the Methodists thus bravely defended their homes when surrounded by rebels.

At Knockmanoul, some of the United Irishmen had called on good old Molly Gregg, to induce her three sons to join their conspiracy; but she refused to admit them, so they determined to have their revenge. One night, her daughter when in bed got a hint, from some person passing the window of her room, of what was about to happen. She therefore awoke her husband, a

sergeant in the yeomanry, and he started without delay for Ballinamallard, secured the assistance of some fourteen of his comrades, and returned just in time to save his mother-in-law and family from the rebels, who had surrounded the house. The yeomen approached with great caution, fired a volley which wounded several of the enemy, and then rushed forward with reloaded muskets, put them to flight, and took some prisoners, one of whom was the ringleader. Some of these were subsequently tried and sentenced to death, while Captain Cushy himself turned King's evidence.*

In some instances the servants of God were preserved without even striking a blow. A correspondent of Mr. Lanktree tells of a small town in the neighbourhood of Coleraine, in which there was only one who steadily evinced the reality of religion, and although the village was burnt, he, his family, and his connections were preserved in the midst of the flames.† Truly "the Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

Notwithstanding the disturbed state of the country, the labours of the itinerants in general were uninterrupted. Thus Mr. Averell was for some time occupied in conducting the June quarterly meetings, which, though in the midst of great excitement, kept up by continual alarms, were numerous attended and eminently acknowledged of the Lord. On the day preceding the service in Mountmellick, seven rebels were executed in the town, and on the day of meeting, four more met with a similar death. Yet amidst all the confusion occasioned by these dreadful scenes, the servants of the Lord had a season of great refreshing, and the presence of God overshadowed them. On the day of meeting at Abbeyleix, an attack on the town was expected; but the threatened danger did not prevent the attendance of the people, nor the rumours of war hinder their finding sweet repose in Him who was their peace. The next day Mr. Averell accompanied Mr. Graham to Ballyhuppahane, and on the journey found the country almost deserted, most of the people having, it was supposed, joined the insurgents, and the few met on the road looked darkly and fiercely at the servants of God, who pursued

* Unpublished Gleanings, by J. G. H.

† Lanktree's Narrative, p. 73.

their way in peace. On arriving at their destination, however, they found their friends in great alarm, expecting a visit from the rebels in the course of the night. Yet there was a large congregation in the evening. Mr. Graham preached a deeply affecting sermon; and at the subsequent prayer-meeting, which was continued until a late hour, the Lord gave the confidence to His waiting people that they would be preserved in safety. According to their faith it was done unto them. On proceeding to their next appointment, the evangelists were surprised at the wonderful change in the spirit of the people they met, from that of the preceding day. News having reached them of the terrible defeat of the insurgents at Leighlinbridge, their ferocious looks gave place to sadness and dejection of countenance. At Mount-rath quarterly meeting, the Lord made bare his arm, and manifested His presence in abundant blessing.

During this most trying period, Dr. Coke also made an extensive visitation through the country, of which details are not now available.

CHAPTER XI.

1798.

As the time approached at which the Conference should be held, many doubted the wisdom of such a meeting, under existing circumstances. In addition to the fears excited as to the personal safety of the preachers, it appeared very questionable how far the Government might consider it right for them to assemble. Dr. Coke, however, obtained special permission from the Lord Lieutenant for the itinerants to meet at a time when all assemblies of more than five men, except the military, were prohibited.

Accordingly on July 9th, Mr. Averell left home in company with Messrs. Smith, Graham, and M'Farland, to attend the Conference, and reached Monasterevin in safety, where they stopped for the night, and had a strengthening and cheering time, while one of the brethren ministered the word of life. Next morning Smith and M'Farland took the mail-coach, but Averell and Graham followed on horseback, trusting in God for protection from the rebels, who were in arms and committing dreadful depredations in several places along their line of road. On arriving at Naas they found the town in great commotion and alarm, a report having been received that the insurgents had burned the coach and killed the passengers. Nothing daunted, the brave evangelists proceeded on their journey, and on reaching the place where it was said the attack had been made, found the coach had been destroyed, and the passengers, including Smith and M'Farland, robbed of their property, but no lives were lost. All was quiet now, nor did the equestrians during their journey meet anything to alarm them. Mr. Averell says he never travelled in greater tranquillity, nor enjoyed more peace of mind, his soul being sweetly united to God in momentary dependence for life and all things.

On July 13th, in the midst of strife and commotion, the preachers assembled from all parts of the kingdom, with Dr. Coke for their president, and went through their ordinary business. Three brethren, Messrs. A. Murdock, John Stephenson, and William Sturgeon, were set apart as missionaries to the West Indies. There was a decrease in the membership of three hundred and seventy-four. It being considered that the fashions of the world were gaining ground among the people, to remedy this evil, it was resolved, that any members who kept boarding-schools, and employed dancing masters for the instruction of their pupils, should, unless they immediately gave it up, be expelled from the Society; that any members who indulged themselves in "frippery in dress," should be expelled, if on reproof they did not reform; and that the preachers should bear public testimony from the pulpit against extravagance in apparel.

The calamities through which the country had passed, as well as the perils to which the preachers themselves had been exposed, are thus described in the Address to the British Conference:—"Though the troubles of our nation when we last addressed you, were exceedingly alarming, they were only the beginning of sorrows. Never did we expect to see so awful a day as we now behold. The scenes of carnage and desolation which open to our view in almost every part of the land are truly affecting; and while we drop the tear of commiseration over our unhappy country, and our deluded countrymen in arms against the best of sovereigns, and the happiest constitution in the world, we cannot help crying, O God, shorten the day of our calamity, or no flesh can be saved! To attempt a description of our deplorable state would be vain indeed. Suffice it to say, that loss of trade, breach of confidence, fear of assassination, towns burned, countries laid waste, houses for miles without an inhabitant, and the air tainted with the stench of thousands of putrid carcasses, form some outline of the melancholy picture of our times. However, in the midst of this national confusion, we and our people in general, blessed be God! have been wonderfully preserved. Though some of us were imprisoned for weeks by the rebels, exposed also to fire and sword in the heat of battle, carried into the enemy's camp, and plundered of almost every valuable, yet we have not suffered the least injury in our persons! And moreover, God, even our own

God, has brought us through all, to see and embrace each other in this favoured city. O that the Church would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness, and for the wonders He hath done for us, the meanest of His servants! But while we bless God for our preservation, we have to lament that on the Carlow and Wicklow circuits, and several others, many Societies have been scattered, and many of our people left without a place to lay their heads. This may in some measure account for the diminution of the membership this year; yet we bless God that in other parts of the kingdom, there has been an ingathering of souls, as well as a deepening of the Lord's work in the hearts of His people." And then in a spirit of heroism, worthy of the best ages of the Christian Church, they proceed, "Through grace we feel a determination to urge on our way, whatever may be our lot. Rather than forsake our charge, for any danger which may arise, God being our helper, we are resolved to die. From what we have felt and seen since these troubles began, it would be injustice not to own that His grace has been sufficient for us, and His strength made perfect in weakness. And He still graciously says unto us, 'Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God.' With this promise we will go forth, not being in any wise terrified by our adversaries."

Several Societies had been dissatisfied and agitated in regard to the course adopted by the Conference as to the ordinances and lay representation. These differences led to the expulsion from the Society on the Lisburn circuit of thirty-two stewards and leaders. Against this decision they appealed to the Conference, which confirmed the resolution of expulsion, with the addendum, "That they be not received again into the Society until God give them repentance."* Evidently the preachers considered that the views of the delinquents were the result of the spirit of insubordination and lawlessness so prevalent, and therefore should be dealt with in a very summary manner. Be that as it may, upwards of two hundred members in consequence left the Society, formed a separate body, and appointed as their minister John M'Clure, who had been recommended, by the Belfast quarterly and district meetings, to the Conference for the itinerancy. Subsequently a

* Life and Labours of the Rev. W. M'Clure, p. 6.

correspondence was entered into with those who had seceded in England, which led to a union. This was the origin of the Methodist New Connexion in Ireland. The dissentients were in general devout and conscientious, and some of them, as old William Black of Lisburn, and George Carlisle of the Maze, men eminent in piety and zeal.

But to return to the Conference. The itinerants held their session, with closed doors and without a sentinel, for nearly three weeks; and at its conclusion received letters of permission and protection from the Government to travel to their respective destinations throughout the country. Lord Castlereagh was the Chief Secretary for Ireland at the time, and Alexander Knox, his private secretary; Coke's influence with whom, sustained by the good reputation of the Methodists, doubtless obtained these special favours.

The members of the British Conference received the Address of their Irish brethren in a most Christian and fraternal spirit, and as an expression of practical sympathy, agreed that the wants of the preachers in Ireland should be supplied before any of their own claims were considered.*

Meanwhile the work of crushing out the rebellion was continued with vigour by the Government, large numbers of the rebels being seized and sentenced to death. In many instances access to these was strictly forbidden; yet sometimes the way was opened to the servants of God by a merciful Providence, and they gladly availed themselves of it. Thus at Coleraine, two men having been condemned to die, and no person being permitted to visit them, the Society offered special prayer on their behalf, and soon afterwards a message was sent to one of the leaders that he would be admitted. The servant of God hastened to the jail, spent the night with the unfortunate criminals, and had the satisfaction at length of seeing one of them truly penitent, and the other rejoicing in the Lord his Saviour. During the night the latter said, "O, sir, I feel as I never felt before. My soul is as if the sun were shining upon it. I have an unspeakable love for the blessed Jesus; and what is strange, I can even pray for those through whom I am to suffer." In this spirit of faith

* Myles' Chronological History, p. 254.

and love, he went home to the Paradise of God. Was "not this a brand plucked from the fire"?

During these troublous times the preachers were seldom interrupted in the prosecution of their work, their loyalty being so fully recognised by the authorities that it was only necessary to procure a pass from a magistrate or military officer, and they might go where they pleased. But a young preacher, having neglected to take this precaution, was stopped by the soldiers and taken to the guard-house, where his saddle-bags were searched. Here was found his diary—a little book with the names of his appointments, and the text on which he had preached at each place. One of these verses happened to be, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." This was ominous; it evidently contained a threat, or at least an implication that some mischief was brewing; and the list of places was very suspicious, so the itinerant was cast into prison. The matter getting noised abroad, one of the Coleraine leaders heard it; and, hastening to the guard-house, explained the real nature of the entries which had alarmed the guardians of the peace; and thus the preacher was at once set at liberty.*

In other cases, however, the servants of God were exposed to more serious peril. James Rutledge, a sergeant in the Leitrim militia, and also a local preacher, was a man of great determination and deep piety. He with a few men under him got charge of a pass at Vinegar Hill. When the rebels came down on him, his men wanted to retreat; but he said he would shoot the first man who dared to do so; and thus kept the pass. Being a terror to evil-doers, a conspiracy was formed against him, and advantage taken of his habit of retiring from the camp for private prayer, to charge him with holding communication with the rebels. He was tried by a court-martial, to which he stated that he withdrew for devotional purposes, but was disbelieved, and, notwithstanding his previous character and services, sentenced to be shot. The case was then laid as usual for confirmation before the Marquis Cornwallis, Commander-in-chief in Ireland, who thought the plea of Rutledge to be very singular, and to satisfy himself

* Unpublished Journal of J. Galt.

sent for him. "You state," said the Lord Lieutenant, "that the purpose for which you so frequently retired outside the camp, was to pray." "Yes, your Excellency," said Rutledge. "Well, if that be so you must be pretty expert at that business now. Kneel down, and give me a specimen of your devotional powers." The Methodist promptly obeyed, and poured out his soul with such freedom and power on behalf of the King, the Lord Lieutenant, the British army, and his country, that before he was half through, Lord Cornwallis interrupted him, saying, "Quite enough. A man of such intercourse with God could never be a rebel." The noble Marquis then revoked the sentence, and placed Rutledge among his personal attendants.

At this time, Gideon Ouseley settled in Sligo, and commenced a boys' school in the little chapel in Bridge street, which was largely attended. Mrs. Ouseley also instructed a number of girls. Mr. Ouseley's soul was burning with love to God and zeal for the conversion of souls. On the market-days he was wont to go through the town crying, "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" He even found time to make excursions occasionally to the surrounding country, notwithstanding many perils, sometimes falling in with parties of rebels, to whom he fearlessly told his gospel message, never failing to point out their errors. He knew well, when he was in danger, and had no liking for it; but whenever it was a question of avoiding it, or leaving his blessed work undone, he never hesitated. In the midst of peril, he believed the best way out of it was by outspoken candour, and carried out his creed in daily practice.

Thus the spirit of insurrection which existed in other parts of this country also prevailed in Connaught, producing in the loyal inhabitants great anxiety and suspense, heightened by numerous false alarms. Often in the night the trumpet sounded, calling the citizens to arms, and spreading consternation abroad. At length the dreaded danger arose. The French under General Humbert, having landed at Killala, advanced as far as Collooney, where they were gallantly met by Colonel Vereker, who commanded the Sligo garrison, but was defeated by the invaders. In the meantime, the townsmen assembled to defend their homes; some of the Methodists met for prayer, others went through the streets singing hymns, and others visited and endeavoured to encourage the

distracted inhabitants. Amongst the last was Mrs. Susan Henry of Ballincar, an aged and pious member of the Society. Seeing a woman weeping at the door of her house, she prayed with and comforted her. This woman was Mrs. Burrows, mother of Michael and George Burrows, and this visit led to her connection and that of her family with Methodism. The prayers thus offered on behalf of the town were answered: the enemy, strangely enough, instead of advancing further, retired towards Boyle and Carrick, was surrounded, and compelled to surrender. Thus Sligo was delivered from hostile occupation.

Meanwhile numerous instances of severe privations occurred. Mrs. Rutledge of Viewmount, an earnest and devoted member of the Society, was at the sea-side with two of her children, when the startling intelligence reached her that the French had landed at Killala. Hastening home, she found her husband in a state of the greatest anxiety about her safety and that of his children, as numbers of the country people had already joined the enemy, and every loyal and peaceable inhabitant was threatened with the destruction of life and property. For several days Mr. Rutledge and his family lived in the greatest suspense; and were obliged each night to seek protection in the house of Colonel C. L. Fitzgerald of Turlough Park. During this trying crisis Mrs. Rutledge calmly rested on the Divine assurance: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

The danger, in the course of a short time, became so urgent that Mr. Rutledge entertained the thought of collecting a few loyal men to defend his house and family. Eventually, however, he resolved, with his eldest son,—a lad in his fifteenth year,—to join the Royal army. Mrs. Rutledge, with a spirit of dauntless heroism, having consented, they mounted their horses, and reached the camp in safety. After they had left home, this brave woman knelt down, implored Divine protection for herself and her children, and thus realized in a strong degree that faith which animated the saints of ancient times, so that they "stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, and out of weakness were made strong." When evening set in, she found it necessary, with her children, to leave home, and for that night they found an asylum in a neighbouring house; but on the following day were compelled to

seek shelter elsewhere, as the owner informed them that the house was marked on their account. Mrs. Rutledge entreated to be allowed to leave her daughter, lest she might fall into the hands of the brutal ruffians that swarmed around ; but this request was refused, and they departed under the cover of darkness, with no provision but a morsel of oaten bread. Thus slenderly provided, they proceeded to a wood on their own farm, having first to wade through a river. Taking shelter under a bush, the children, wet and weary, soon fell asleep, while the afflicted mother spent the night in prayer to Him, whose watchful Providence is ever guarding, and whose eyelids never slumber. When day returned, seeing that the rebels had taken possession of her house and destroyed everything in it, she removed to a thicker part of the wood, and there procured a quantity of hay, which supplied a bed.

In this retreat Mrs. Rutledge and her two children spent several days and nights, during which they felt the pangs of both hunger and thirst, and had many hair-breadth escapes. At one time she was glad to seize by stealth a few potatoes out of her own fields ; and again, to carry a little water from the river in her son's hat, to allay the thirst of her children. Encouraged by success, she ventured the same night to the herd's house, hoping to procure a little bread. On reaching it, she looked through a crevice, and, seeing a basket of potatoes, as she thought, opened the door softly, but was much alarmed to find the room filled with rebels. As, however, they were in a profound sleep, she ventured in, and brought out the basket, which unfortunately contained nothing but peelings. Her heart, however, was filled with gratitude for deliverance ; and, on her return, the Lord directed her steps through a field of wheat, of which she plucked a quantity, and brought it to her children, and so, for the time being, satisfied the cravings of hunger. At one time, her little boy, who was very ill, ventured to walk beyond the precincts of their hiding place, and was perceived by some of the insurgents ; but he providentially escaped to his retreat, though his pursuers were heard uttering oaths and menaces, while they sought for him in the surrounding wood. At another time, her servant boy, a Romanist, who had joined the rebels, passed close to the spot where they were concealed, accompanied by her own dog. The animal entered their retreat, but—as if Providence had restrained its ordinary sagacity—appeared to have forgotten

them, and passed on another way, leading the servant, who was searching for them, altogether away from the spot.

While passing through such severe trials, Mrs. Rutledge manifested extraordinary peace and fortitude, arising from unshaken confidence in her Almighty Friend, whose forgiving love and protecting care she had enjoyed for so many years. Thus she was enabled to support and cheer the sinking spirits of her children. After a time, she succeeded in getting a small supply of food from a neighbour, at whose door she ventured to call at midnight. Then at length the long looked-for deliverance arrived. The rebels, with their foreign allies, being completely defeated, Mr. Rutledge returned once more to his family; and though they found their goods destroyed, and their house in ruins, gratitude filled their hearts, as they united in acknowledging the continued care of a loving Providence.*

Mr. John Hamilton was appointed to Skibbereen. Already societies had been formed at Ardraly and Aghadown; but the devoted missionary pushed his way to Ballydehob, Skull, and Lissacaha, then very small villages. As he entered the last mentioned place for the first time, he saw a large crowd that had assembled to attend a pattern. Worship being over, they proceeded to pleasure; and as Mr. Hamilton approached he was seized by a buxom damsel, and pressed to dance. He said he could not do that, but he could pray; and kneeling down began to plead with God on behalf of the people. Dancing now was out of the question; and so having gained their attention, he proceeded to deliver his message of mercy. Many listened and were impressed. Before leaving he said if anyone would give accommodation, he would return in a fortnight and preach again. A farmer and cooper named Camier, at once volunteered; and at the appointed time Mr. Hamilton went; thus a society was soon formed, and subsequently a chapel built.

One Sunday, when in this part of the country, the missionary having gone to the parish church, he was observed by the officiating minister, who beckoned him to the reading-desk, asked if he was a Methodist preacher, and on learning that he was, said, "You must preach for us to-day." "I intend to do

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1833, pp. 48-53.

so in the open air," said the itinerant, "after the close of the service." "O, you must preach here," said the clergyman; and at once announced to the congregation that a Methodist preacher was present, who would address them; and added: "Why should they not preach? They are as good Protestants as any of us." Mr. Hamilton delivered his message from the desk, to a people who listened with tearful astonishment to the strange things brought to their hearing, and urged him to return, so that an arrangement was then and there made for regular visits to the neighbourhood. The clergyman invited the missionary to dinner, and as hay-making was proceeding at the glebe, Mr. Hamilton expressed surprise, and was met with the lively reply, "Did you never hear that we must make hay while the sun shines?" The rector, however, evinced no hostility to men whose ministry became the means of supplying his lack of service, and of effecting a notable change throughout the entire district.

Amongst those who yielded to the gracious influences of the Spirit, at this time, was Mrs. Mary Keeffe, who was one of the first to join the Society in Skibbereen. She and her amiable sister, Mrs. Moore, hospitably entertained the preachers, and did much to facilitate efforts to promote the glory of God, in the salvation of sinners. The Lord gave her length of days with many earthly comforts, and to the end kept her soul in peace.* Another who became a member of the Society in the town, was a young man named George Levis, who continued heartily connected with Methodism until his death, a period of about forty years. He was remarkable for his humility, charity, and Christian liberality.†

At Bandon, Miss Cambridge continued faithfully and zealously to work for the Master, endeavouring both by private and personal intercourse, and by public efforts, as suitable occasions were afforded, to lead sinners to the Saviour, "the Lord confirming the word with signs following." Thus, in the summer of this year, she held a meeting at Charles' fort, when nearly all the soldiers of the regiment quartered there, with their wives and children attended, and so powerfully did the Holy Spirit apply the word that many of these veteran warriors were seen weeping like

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1834, pp. 393-94.

† *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1837, p. 626.

children, and some were led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross.

Messrs. M'Mullen and Lanktree were stationed in Cork, where they had large and intelligent congregations, together with stewards and leaders heartily devoted to God. Mr. Lawrence Kane, "a walking library," proved also a most valuable help in promoting the good work. Mr. M'Mullen was very strict in discipline, and strongly opposed to "frippery in dress," in consequence of which a few were offended; but in general the Society increased and prospered, and the services were much acknowledged of the Lord. A visit of Messrs. Murdock and William Sturgeon, *en route* to the West Indies, was also made a great blessing.

Messrs. Jenkin and Taylor, two other missionaries, who also sailed for the West Indies, were with others wrecked at the Old Head of Kinsale, plundered of all their property, and compelled to suffer the greatest privations, without a friend to whom they could apply for assistance. When leaving the scene of disaster their forlorn appearance excited the sympathy of a respectable innkeeper, who met them on the road, and sent a young man to escort them into town, with directions to his wife to afford them every accommodation. She, although a Romanist, and knowing that they had no means of remuneration, entered most heartily into her husband's views, showed them every attention, and was most unwilling to consent to their subsequent removal to the lodgings of the preacher in Kinsale. The parish priest also received them with much courtesy, and promised to use his influence to regain some of the stolen property, expressing at the same time his fear that all would be fruitless on account of the wickedness and infidelity of the people. "I always consider it my duty," said this philanthropic priest, "to exert myself to the uttermost on behalf of every stranger in distress, but particularly for you, who, I have been informed, are missionaries. It is true you and I differ in judgment, touching some particular points of doctrine, and forms of worship, but we agree in the most important matters; we both serve the same Master, aim at His glory, and are labouring to save souls from ruin. You are therefore my brothers in Christ, and as such are entitled to a share of all that I possess."*

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1820, pp. 178-79.

At the Conference this year, Mr. Averell was appointed as a supernumerary in Dublin, where he spent a considerable portion of his time ; but did not confine his labours to the city, making an occasional excursion to the country. During one of these tours, soon after his arrival at Cloughjordan, four men appeared and demanded his authority to preach. He showed them his letters of orders, but they were not satisfied, and left, saying with an oath if he did not produce better credentials, he should not preach there. As in the evening he ascended the pulpit, some of these conservators of the peace entered the house, and produced an order, commanding him to leave the town in half an hour, or answer for his conduct. He told them he was ready to accompany them at once, but was informed his presence would not be required until the following morning. "Then," said he, "we shall have preaching in the meantime;" and during the singing, the representatives of law and order withdrew. The Lord blessed His word, and made it spirit and life to many that heard it. They had also a peaceful time next morning, and were refreshed from on high. Mr. Averell was then cited before a magistrate, who inquired by what authority he preached, and swore he would not recognise the letters of orders. The faithful servant of God reproved him for his profanity, which only incensed him more. At length this worthy justice of the peace ordered the preacher to leave the town within twenty-four hours, or he would send him to jail. Mr. Averell bowed, saying he did not need so much time, as his business required him to leave in about an hour, and withdrew, while a volley of oaths rung in his ears, such as he never before had heard.

At Athlone, he preached in the open air to a large assembly; and as he left the town, overtook on the road Dr. Hodson,* a gentleman of considerable property, who had fallen into ill health; and was now so weak as to require to be supported on horseback. Mr. Averell had not seen the doctor for some years, and little thought at first that the emaciated person he saw before him was his old acquaintance. Surprised on discovering who he was, he exclaimed, "Is this my old friend, Hodson?" "Yes," replied the other, "all that remains of him." After some passing

* He was a nephew of the celebrated Oliver Goldsmith.

remarks, Mr. Averell said, "Well, doctor, you know how to treat the dying body, and I have one advice to give you, with regard to the undying soul: 'Prepare to meet thy God.'" Such counsel was new to the dying man, and at the time produced no salutary effect; for with unconcealed indignation, he ordered the servant to turn the horse, and lead him home. On his way back, his displeasure increased, so that his family saw at once the agitation of his mind, and, thinking there was something wrong, inquired if he had had any unfavourable change. "No," said he, "but I met one of the greatest monsters I ever saw; that savage, Averell, told me to prepare to meet God." On reaching his room, he became apparently worse. "My bodily weakness," said he, "was enough to have borne; but that Averell has so tortured my mind, that my sufferings are intolerable." He then proposed a game of whist, hoping that it would divert his attention, and give him some relief; but in vain. His distress increased, and one of his family, fearing he was drawing near the closing scene of life, proposed to send for Sam Hughes, a Methodist leader, to pray with him. "Sam Hughes," said the doctor; "O yes, I know Sam; I like him; send for him." Hughes was sent for, and, though not often invited to pay religious visits to persons in such a social position, promptly obeyed the summons. After the doctor had inveighed against Mr. Averell for his harsh and unfeeling conduct, which, he said, had so disturbed his mind as to greatly aggravate his sufferings, Sam saw that the Spirit of God was at work, and proposed prayer. This opened the way for religious conversation, during which the good man told his religious experience, how he had been awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger, and enabled to cast himself on the mercy of God in Christ so as to realize peace and joy in believing. Inquiry succeeded inquiry on the part of the doctor, as to how he should look to Jesus, and know that his sins were pardoned; and thus the night was spent in alternate conversation and prayer. Before break of day, "the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings," and the anxious inquirer was enabled to rejoice in the favour of God. This great change in Dr. Hodson, led to a revival in his memory of scenes in early life. One on which he particularly dwelt was, that when a little boy, he had heard Mr. Wesley preach, who, as was his

wont, put his hands on his head and prayed the Lord to bless him. "And now," he added, "his prayer is answered; I am blessed indeed." On the following day, he passed to the home above.

But to return to Mr. Averell. Having preached in Moate, Mullingar, and some other towns in that quarter, he returned to Cloughjordan, where, notwithstanding the opposition he had lately met with there, he preached several times to crowded congregations, without interruption. About the middle of November, he set out on a tour through the counties of Wexford and Wicklow, which were still in a very unsettled state. On entering New Ross, he observed the town presented an awful spectacle, the portion of which that stood on the hill, consisting of about two hundred houses, being entirely burned. Here he found the members of the Old Ross Society, with the Protestants of that town and its neighbourhood, their dwellings having been all destroyed. In the hurry of their flight they had been obliged to leave most of their property behind, including Bibles and other books, which were used by the rebels to set the parish church on fire, so that all were consumed together. Enniscorthy, which had been one of the most flourishing towns in the province, was almost a complete ruin; yet there was a large congregation, and a solemn awe rested on the people. The men, with few exceptions, wore military uniforms, and the women deep mourning, as there were few who had not to lament the loss of friends.

At Wexford, he preached to a careless crowd, who seemed to have no relish for the Gospel. Most of the Protestants of this town, who had fallen into the hands of the rebels, submitted to receive the rites of the Romish Church, as the condition upon which their lives were to be spared. But though they renounced the faith of their fathers, they could scarcely be called apostates, for they had little Christianity from which to apostatize. Brief as had been the time since the appalling scenes of blood had been witnessed in the town, never was sin and folly more prevalent. Even the bridge, where hundreds of Protestants had been cruelly murdered, was the centre of gaiety—a place for public amusement and resort on the Lord's day! But a brighter day was soon to dawn on this gay and frivolous people.

The Methodists had, at this time, the use of the Quaker meeting-house, a small, shed-like building, within an enclosure of high walls not far from Allen street. In this place, both before and after the rebellion, the word of life was ministered, and at length proved a means of abundant spiritual blessing.

At Newtownbarry, Mr. Averell met with Mrs. M'Loughlin, who had returned thither from Enniscorthy, and finding her in great destitution, at once espoused her cause, by seeking to obtain for her admission into the Widows' Almshouse, Dublin. When the case came before the trustees, it was at once rejected, as she lived so far beyond the limits fixed by the rules. Still Mr. Averell urged the matter, and as the trustees continued inflexible, he said, they should not be surprised if God would show some mark of His displeasure for their rejection of this pious woman. The next day, one of the widows died, and Mrs. M'Loughlin's claim was again brought forward, and again refused. In the course of a few days, two more of the widows died, which so alarmed the surviving inmates, that they waited on Mr. Keene, who had the chief management of the institution, and begged that "Mr. Averell's widow might be received, or they would all die." The trustees now agreed to admit the good woman, with the express understanding that her case should not be considered as a precedent. Thus she became an inmate of this home of mercy, and continued to adorn her profession until God called her to the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

In continuing his tour, Mr. Averell visited Arklow, where were crowded together all the Protestants of the surrounding country, amongst whom there was much religious life. This was in a great measure owing to the Divine blessing on the labours of some pious soldiers, who subscribed ten shillings each week to pay for the use of a room, in which services were held daily. These meetings were numerous attended, and, in general, accompanied with much of the presence and power of God. Mr. Averell had a large congregation at the public service, after which he held a love-feast, which proved indeed a feast of love.

CHAPTER XII.

1799.

ON January 1st, 1799, the annual breakfast meeting was held in Whitefriar street chapel, Dublin, which proved a time of blessing and encouragement. There was much life and zeal amongst the people, and the funds of the Society, as well as those of the institutions connected with it, stood well, so that the Lord thus gave tokens of His presence and blessing at the opening service of the new year.

About this time, Mr. Shillington removed from Drumcree to Portadown, which afforded a more central position, both as to commercial and religious life. Here he rose to a position of commanding influence, and accomplished a noble work. When he came, Methodism had little more than an existence in the town. There was the fragment of a class; but the leader's inconsistencies were such that he failed to command respect, and ere long his connection with the Society ceased. An attempt had been made to erect a house of prayer, but the unfinished walls proclaimed the fewness and feebleness of those who desired to accomplish this object. Thus, numerically, spiritually, and financially the state of the work was very low. But Mr. Shillington was not a man to "despise the day of small things," or shun a cause which he believed to be good because of its weakness; he immediately identified himself with it, infusing at once a life and energy previously unknown. While he became the spiritual father of the Society in the town, his godly example, fidelity, and consistent attachment to Methodism, together with his incessant labours as a local preacher, proved a blessing to the whole country.

In this neighbourhood, at Ryefield, Soldierstown, there resided a Miss Richardson, who had been brought under serious religious

impressions, and went on a visit to Dublin, where she was invited to the Methodist chapel. Thus her spiritual anxiety was greatly increased. She carried home with her the hallowing influence of the truths heard, and the means of grace attended in the metropolis, and at once united with the Society. Soon after having thus become a Methodist, she attended a quarterly meeting at Bluestone, which was greatly owned of God. When the preacher announced his text, his voice was drowned in earnest cries for mercy which arose from all parts of the house, so that the usual service had to be dispensed with, and a prayer-meeting held which was continued until a late hour. Among the many who then were enabled to rejoice in the Lord their Saviour was Miss Richardson, and from that day until her death, being more than forty years, she walked in the unclouded light of God's countenance. Having obtained mercy herself, she felt deeply interested in the welfare of others, and desired that the ministry which had been instrumental in her salvation should have a suitable building for its exercise in the neighbourhood. She therefore projected the erection of a chapel in the place which was the scene of her conversion, and in this undertaking received much assistance and encouragement. Mr. Shillington was among her counsellors and friends, and rendered valuable advice and aid. Mr. George Chapman, then a zealous and devoted young man, also united in this godly enterprise. A suitable plot of ground was soon procured, some persons contributed money, others laboured with their hands, and not a few sent horses to draw materials; so that in a short time the devout little band saw the completion of their design, in the consecration of their chapel to the worship and service of God. Here the Sunday school, which for more than ten years had been conducted by the Methodists, obtained a permanent place, and has been carried on since with great efficiency. From this period Methodism made rapid progress in that part of the country; large and prosperous Societies were raised up, and the entire neighbourhood presented a marked improvement in its moral and religious condition.*

In spring Mr. Averell set out on an evangelistic tour to the south. At Clonmel he found the work of the Lord blessedly

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1844, pp. 633-35.

prospering, many of the soldiers, having obtained salvation by faith, adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour. All the services—preaching, sacramental, and love-feast—proved seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. There were also several very happy social meetings; at one of which a devoted brother, who was observed to say the name Jesus frequently, on being asked why he did so, replied, when he found himself becoming in any degree lukewarm, he was wont to lift up his heart to God with all the devotion he could command, and give expression to the ever blessed name. Thus spiritual life was restored, and his soul became again centred in God. At Mallow, Mr. Averell preached with more hope of doing good than ever he had done before, although the people were much agitated by alarming rumours. At Cork, he found tokens of revival in all the classes, which he attributed under God to lively, well-conducted prayer-meetings, and the strict discipline which was observed, especially with regard to dress.

Proceeding on his way to Bandon, Mr. Averell was met by a friend, who told him that he could not get into the town, as the commanding officer had issued an order that strangers should not be allowed to enter. The brave minister answered, "If God has sent me, He will get me in;" entered without any hindrance, and preached in the evening with great liberty to a crowded congregation. The following morning was a time of much blessing, almost every one present at the service being subdued under a sense of the Divine presence and power. At Glandore, while he preached to a few careless persons, they were greatly terrified by stones thrown through the windows. "My fear," says Mr. Averell, "was that Satan had no cause of alarm, as he seemed in little danger of losing this place." Having visited Castletownsend, Skibbereen, Baltimore, Ardaly, and Aghadown, in all of which there were large congregations, he went on to some most out-of-the-way places. The account he gives of this journey will show what hardships the preachers had to endure in this part of the country. Having preached at Aghadown at two o'clock in the morning, he discoursed at Lisheenacrehig "to a sweet, loving, holy people;" and in the evening at Bawnaknockane, to a simple-hearted congregation. Next morning he preached at Gurteen-ulla, to a few ignorant persons, buried in superstition and dirt. It

was like ploughing on a rock; yet some were alarmed. He then proceeded to Ballydehob, which presented a striking contrast to the place he had just left. Here was a large room full of attentive and serious hearers, many of whom were like soil well prepared for the seed. On the whole he was very favourably impressed with this district of country, as a most promising field of Christian work, and refers especially to the family of the Swantons, who have been so long and heartily identified with Methodism.

The day following was one of hard toil and scanty fare. He preached at six o'clock in the morning, and afterwards had a very blessed time with about twenty, to whom he administered the Sacrament. Setting out immediately, he reached Gubbeen at ten, and addressed about fifty persons, most of whom showed by their deep emotion, that the Lord had accompanied His word with power to their hearts. At two, Mr. Averell preached at Kilpatrick,* where he had most of his former hearers, who were able to make their way along the rocky, barren wild, over which they had to pass, faster on foot than he could ride. Here, also, the Lord blessed His word, and gave the people sweet meltings of heart. Passing thence over the most rugged road the preacher had ever travelled, at about half-past four he reached the Altar, a rock near the sea shore, the most extraordinary place he ever saw on which to erect a human habitation. Yet here, in a little cabin, were assembled upwards of thirty Protestants; but they were piteous objects, clothed in rags, and truly as sheep without a shepherd. Until this secluded spot had been searched out and visited by the preachers, the people were as benighted as heathens, but were now brought under a concern for their salvation. They heard with the attention of persons anxious to be instructed, and God blessed them. Mr. Averell's next journey was a continuous clambering over rocks, to Ballyrisode, a small peninsula between Cape Clear and Crookhaven, where he preached to the largest assembly of Protestants he had met throughout the day—many of whom, when the preacher came among them, had almost gone over to the Church of Rome. They all heard with attention; some saw men as trees walking, and a few were still

* In the house of Mr. and Mrs. Roycroft.

more enlightened. In the course of this day, the servant of God travelled upwards of twenty miles over bad roads, having often to go on foot, preached five times, and administered the Sacrament once, without any refreshment except some milk; yet, "Blessed be God," he says, "I neither felt hungry nor fatigued." Turning northward by Crookhaven, he came to Dunmanus, where, at brother Justice's, he had a good many hearers, some of whom were truly devoted Christians. The next day he had an unpleasant ride over very steep mountains to Bantry, where he met Mr. John Hamilton. Here and at Rooska, in the same vicinity, they spent two days; in both places had large congregations, and were favoured with much of the Divine presence, especially at a love-feast in Bantry.

From the county of Cork, Messrs. Averell and Hamilton went to Kerry, and stopping at the cross roads, near Kenmare, where they had been informed there were some Protestants, Mr. Averell preached, with reason to hope that God would raise up for Himself a people in this desert. Immediately after the close of the service two soldiers entered the house, arrested the preachers, and took them to the barrack; but the officer in command happened to know Mr. Averell by report, and thus the prisoners were at once liberated. In Milltown, there were crowded congregations at the public services, and at the love-feast the Lord poured out His Spirit abundantly. A breakfast-meeting also was held, at which there were about forty present, three of whom were enabled to receive and rest on Jesus as their Saviour. At Tralee, Mr. Averell, who was the guest of Mr. Giles, bore a strong testimony against the twofold rebellion of the day, that against God, and against the King; and at Riverville, he had a blessed time in ministering the word of life. On the following Sunday, the Rev. E. Nash preached a sound, useful sermon in the church of Ballymacelligott, and Mr. Averell followed with one to an immense crowd in an adjoining field, after which the two clergymen administered the Lord's supper, in a barn, to a large number of communicants. When the adults had received the elements, seven boys and girls, whose hearts the Lord had touched, came forward and with tears asked if they might be permitted to partake of the Sacrament. While prayer was offered on their behalf, they cried aloud for mercy, and three of them believed;

and in partaking of the memorials of the Saviour's dying love, the remaining four were enabled to rejoice in a sin-pardoning God. At Limerick, Mr. Averell spent two happy days, happy not only to himself, but also to many others, there being much of the presence and power of God in all the services.

At this period the Society at Roscommon received an important addition to its membership, chiefly through the influence of some Carbineers. There were in the regiment a number of Methodists, including Sergeant Noble Sproule, a faithful and zealous leader. He urged upon James Tyler, Robert Johnston, and several others of the townspeople, the necessity of a change of heart, so that they were led to seek and find the favour of God. When the soldiers were removed, these godly men resolved to persevere in holiness and keep together in Christian fellowship. Thus Methodism obtained a position in the town.*

Dr. Coke made his usual evangelistic tour through the country; but the only available record is of his visit to Coleraine, where he arrived on June 1st, preached to large congregations, and administered the Lord's supper. He then, accompanied by Mr. John Galt, jun., continued his journey through Londonderry, Tyrone, and Fermanagh.†

The Conference assembled on July the 5th, with Dr. Coke as president, and Mr. John Kerr secretary. Seven candidates were received on trial, including Henry Deery of Mountrath, William Ap Richard of Tanderagee, James Lowry of Belfast, William Kidd of Newry, and William Jackson of Armagh. There was a decrease in the membership of four hundred and three. One preacher, Samuel Mitchell, who had done good service to the cause was no longer recognised as a member of the Conference. Having imbibed the unscriptural notion that there is a state of grace attainable, in which it is impossible to make further progress, and from which there can be no declension, the subjects being like "a vessel filled till it can hold no more, then corked and sealed." This opinion he earnestly pressed on his colleagues, two of whom unhappily embraced it, and professed to be thus sealed. Several persons on his circuit also were in like manner led astray. Poor Mitchell and his two brethren gave melancholy

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1832, pp. 245-47.

† Unpublished Journal of J. Galt.

proof that their assurance rested on a frail foundation; one of them left the work, and it is to be feared lost his religion; the other was expelled for immorality; while the author of the heresy became a shameless drunkard, so that after earnest admonition and much forbearance, he also was expelled from the ministry. It is exceedingly doubtful whether any of those who professed to be thus sealed continued to maintain that union with Christ, which they had previously experienced. So needful is it to "watch and pray always," and to give heed to the solemn warning, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."*

But to return to the Conference, which is memorable in the annals of Irish ecclesiastical history, as having projected the first organized evangelistic mission ever attempted with direct reference to the Roman Catholic population of the country. In his late visits Dr. Coke had been more than ever impressed with the necessity of appointing a special agency for the conversion of the peasantry through the medium of their own language; and therefore proposed a plan by which certain brethren should be set apart to travel through unfrequented districts, and when needful address the people in their native tongue. At first this proposal was deemed impracticable, and few were disposed to support it; but he was not the man to abandon a project which he considered good, because it did not meet with immediate approval. The time now appeared specially opportune; as the rebellion was practically crushed, martial law no longer existed, and the itinerants had no reason to dread either being waylaid by prowling bands of insurgents or regarded with suspicion by those in authority. The minds of the people were subdued; the awful scenes of Vinegar Hill, Wexford, New Ross, and Scullabogue still haunted them; the remembrance of the terrible retribution was fresh and vivid; and desolated homesteads ravaged by death and destruction kept before them the sad consequences of rebellion and sin, while the religious teachers who had led them on to ruin, had in many instances lost their confidence. There were also available men peculiarly adapted to the work; one only obstacle remained, the lack of funds; but the doctor undertook the

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1861, p. 154.

responsibility of providing these, and then the measure was carried. Subsequent events have amply justified the wisdom of this decision.

In the Address to the British Conference, the project is thus referred to:—"With bleeding hearts we have seen the melancholy consequences of our deluded countrymen's imbibing the unprincipled views of a blood-thirsty and cruel nation. But we entertain the pleasing hope that the time of visitation to the hitherto unfortunate people composing the majority of our nation is now at hand. God in His gracious providence, appears to be opening a door among them. A plan has been formed for teaching the native Irish in their own language. Two of our respected brethren, of considerable standing in the Connexion, have entered upon one of the most arduous undertakings that have been attempted since the primitive times. Our ardent prayers are presented to the God of missionaries for the success of these men, who have made a sacrifice of every social comfort, that they may bring lost sinners to the Shepherd and Bishop of souls."

The two brethren here referred to were James M'Quigg and Charles Graham, who stood head and shoulders over all the other members of the Conference as Irish speakers, and were doubtless designated by Providence for this important work. Before the arrangements were completed, however, it was considered desirable that a third should be associated with them, and Gideon Ouseley was nominated. He never had offered himself as a candidate, had not passed any examination; and so independent and spontaneous had been his labours, that no one was entitled to say he would really undertake the work. But many of the preachers knew him, and all felt that, in his spirit, gifts, and fruit, he had a kind of credential rising far above what boards of examination could have given. He was therefore at once appointed as a colleague of Mr. Graham, without, however, being formally accepted as a regular probationer; and a note was placed on the Minutes indicating that he was only tentatively employed. The tidings of this decision proved a great joy to him. As to what relation to the Conference he might hold, or what pecuniary arrangements were involved, he cared nothing. All he saw was an opportunity afforded for proclaiming the glad tidings of

salvation far and near, which he heartily embraced.* The missionaries were not confined to circuits, but had full liberty to travel through the whole land; while for their protection a pass was obtained from the Lord Lieutenant. They regarded themselves as set apart with primary and particular reference to the Irish-speaking Romanists, and any success amongst others was looked upon as subordinate to this. Thus their grand aim was the subjugation of Irish Popery to the faith of Christ.

Mr. Graham's previous circuit was Longford, and on returning thither from the Conference, he heard that a man was lying in prison, just about to be executed. Hastening to the cell, he found a priest with the culprit, reading prayers, and therefore knelt down, and said "Amen" to every good petition, but was silent when saints and angels were addressed. The priest having concluded his offices, Graham spoke to the prisoner, directing him to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Expostulated with for interfering, he quietly replied, "Do not be displeased; every one should be willing to assist the dying;" and then in Irish told "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." The poor man showed such interest and emotion, that Graham knelt down and pleaded for his salvation even then at the eleventh hour. The culprit cried aloud for mercy, was again directed to Calvary, and soon calmed down to peace of mind. The priest was confounded, but could not oppose. Mr. Graham expressed his strong hope with regard to this sincere penitent, who "went to the drop with a firm step."

Next day, Graham "took the street," and there preached in English and Irish; many wept, some smote their breasts, others knelt down, and not a few even kissed the ground. On his journey westward he conversed in Irish with the people whom he met, one of whom fell upon his knees and cried aloud to God for mercy.

The missionary hastened to Sligo to meet his colleague; and began his work, Ouseley being absent. On Sunday, July 28th, he stood at the corner of two streets, where he could see and be seen by the people, and was soon surrounded by a vast multitude, from whom his manly bearing, and clear, commanding

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 81-2.

voice, secured a hearing. After a week of services in the neighbouring country, he again preached in the street. During the service some son of Belial held up a pig by the ear until its shrill squeak competed with the voice of the preacher; then a soldier came forward and began to bark like a dog; when he was removed, an oyster-man lifted up his voice and shouted, "Shell wares!" But the evangelist had resources to fall back upon they knew not of. Waiting and persevering, he overcame all, and finally pealed forth the truths of endless death and life with a power "that bore down all before it."

On the evening of August 11th, we first obtain a sight of the two yoke-fellows together, riding into Riverstown. Saturday evening as it was, Graham collected a congregation, preached, and met the Society. The priest, suspecting that the itinerants would aim at his own flock, took care to warn them well on the following morning, and made preparation to give the intruders a hot reception. But no sooner were his people out of mass than a well-mounted man of middle-height and powerful frame, with his right eye closed, and a black cap on, was in their midst, earnestly addressing them in the simple and touching language of their own firesides. Before the priest had succeeded in carrying out his plan of attack, Graham came up with a number of friends to strengthen and protect Ouseley, so that all the Romish ecclesiastic could do was to try and draw away the hearers. But in this he failed, as their attention had been so completely gained that for an hour and a half they listened with interest and even approval to the alternate addresses of the two evangelists. Of course the senior missionary, besides watching the people, took note of his colleague, and recorded as his judgment that Mr. Ouseley was one of the best Irish preachers he had ever heard.

Shortly after leaving Riverstown, the missionaries met a number of peasants returning from a holy well, where they had been attending a patron. As the poor people, in little groups, straggled along the road, they doubtless expected to exchange a courteous "God save your honour!" with the gentlemen on horseback; but were surprised to find themselves addressed in the kindest manner and in the best Irish. Their attention and sympathy were thus gained, as they were told of Him who loved them, who came from heaven to save them, and who would

forgive all their sins. They fell on their knees, smote their breasts, and with uplifted hands and streaming eyes called upon the Lord for mercy. The servants of God prayed in their midst, and then proceeded towards the well, to which a hoary-headed man ran before them, and called upon the people to come and listen to the Gospel. Graham preached, and all the time he did so, the old man, and also a woman continued on their knees, weeping bitterly.

The fame of the missionaries soon spread far and wide. Their appearance in fairs and markets; their preaching on horseback; their wonderful Irish; and especially the unheard of changes in heart and life through their labours, became the theme of common conversation, so that almost wherever they went they found some prepared by report to welcome, and others to oppose them. Thus on their arrival at Manorhamilton, on a Saturday evening, the priest went to the rector, who was a magistrate, and represented that they had come to turn him out of his chapel. "If that be so," said the sagacious justice, "they will put me out of my church also; and so I will order them to be taken up." Graham, however, sent two friends to inform his worship that they had no such intentions: and accordingly was permitted not only to preach in the morning and meet the class, "which was like the opening of heaven," but also to conduct a service out of doors, at which the missionaries were gladly heard. A few days later, they were assailed in some country place by "a blaspheming Rabshakeh," who would fain have laid hands on them, and told Mr. Ouseley that if he had a book, he would swear there was neither God nor devil, heaven nor hell.

After a few weeks we find both Ouseley and Graham again in Sligo, where the former preached to the fishermen in the streets; and his comrade says, "I came forward to assist him, and was now delivered from that cursed shame, which long pursued me." On the Sunday they took their stand beside the old market-house, preached, and had reason to believe many were truly touched by the power of the Spirit. One gentleman, who lived opposite, came and begged them to make his house their home. On a succeeding Sunday, Graham says, Ouseley stood at the market-place, and he accompanied him. The priests had resolved to make an end of the "Black caps." While Graham spoke the

immense crowd stood still, but when Ouseley began it was the signal for a general shout. They tied kettles to the tails of dogs, and drove them among the crowd. For the moment Ouseley was silenced; but, rising above the din, the clear voice of Graham rang out in articulate thunder: "It is all in vain for the sons of Belial to endeavour by means like these to uphold the devil's kingdom, for the Lord Jesus has resolved on its ruin, and down it must come." The eyes and ears of the people were once more with the missionaries, who, in spite of the disturbers, were allowed to proceed, and even to conclude the service in peace. All this time meetings in the chapel and in private houses showed that at the services out of doors many, both Protestants and Roman Catholics, had received impressions too deep to be concealed, and members were daily added to the Society. Amongst these was a young man named George Stokes, who soon after settled in Strokestown, where for nearly half a century he walked in the fear of the Lord, and continued heartily identified with Methodism.

The most noteworthy, however, of those converted was the Rev. Booth Caldwell, the minister of the Presbyterian Church in the town, who was led to see that though he had been preaching to others he had himself never realized the saving power of the Gospel. He was thus led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross; and no sooner did he obtain peace and joy in believing than he gave evidence of remarkable devotion to God, often spending whole nights in prayer for the salvation of souls. Until his death he continued a recognized member of the Society, regularly attending its class-meetings and other services.

One day in a churchyard, as a number of Romanists, according to their custom, knelt at the graves of deceased relatives, praying for the repose of their souls, Ouseley bowed down among them, and poured forth in Irish, as to a loving Father, a fervent supplication for eternal life. It is said that the people were affected as if something wonderful was about to come to pass. Both the missionaries then addressed them in English and in Irish, and the fruit of the seed sown that day was abundant. At Boyle, the military officers, who generally were friends to the preachers, turned violently against them; and, thus encouraged, the mob attacked the servants of God with rotten eggs and other odious missiles. A Scapularian, proud of his order, opened a controversy,

but soon finding himself unable to meet the arguments of his antagonists, called one the old, and the other the young devil. In this town the clergy of the Established Church also joined in the general opposition.

On October the 10th at Mosstown, the evangelists write: "We have great crowds to hear us wherever we go, and our labours seem to be attended with great blessings to the people. The Roman Catholics are exceedingly affected in every place; of a truth God is with us. We are preaching in the streets and in the markets, and by the highways as we go along. We preached in the market at Jamestown to one of the largest congregations we ever beheld; nor do we think we ever saw a people more affected under the word. They were weeping in numbers on every hand; the Lord sent the word with power to their hearts. Also in Mohill and Longford, last Saturday, we spoke three times, and glory be to God, it was not in vain. Some of the poor Catholics said it was the best market they ever had."

Twelve days later, Mr. Graham, in a letter from Tullamore, says:—"We preached in the fair yesterday to a crowd of hardened sinners, but they gave us a patient hearing. This day we purpose to preach in the market. We are now become fair and market men. This is the most effectual way to spread the Gospel that ever was devised. We do more in spreading truth in one fair or market day, than we do in weeks or months in private places. In some markets the cries, and tears, and groans of the people are enough to rend the heavens."

The missionaries having travelled slowly through the centre of the country, from the west to the eastern coast, proceeded northward. At Balbriggan, a Roman Catholic woman having called on them, while at breakfast, they proclaimed to her the good tidings of the kingdom; the power of God descended, and at once leaving their meal, they had recourse to prayer. They also preached out of doors, and "had a patient and profitable hearing." At Drogheda, having conducted a service in the open air, they were summoned before Mr. Ralph Smyth, the Mayor, who gave them leave to preach in the tholsel; and he, the sheriff, and some clergymen attended. The crowd was immense, and the Romanists especially appeared greatly affected. The Mayor then said the evangelists might preach wherever they pleased. Mr.

Sillery who had occupied the civic chair the year preceding, became their friend; and a son of his joined the Society. The latter gentleman subsequently entered the Church, and became chaplain to St. Stephen's Hospital, Dublin. He was a faithful minister of Christ, always remained affectionately attached to Mr. Ouseley, and often attended the Methodist services, continuing to meet in class for some time after his ordination.

From Drogheda the missionaries went to Ardee, where a large number assembled to hear, many of whom were soon bathed in tears; some clapped their hands and cried out, and not a few found the Gospel to be the power of God unto their salvation. Next day the evangelists appeared at Kingscourt, preached in the market-house to a vast number of Romanists, and were so encouraged in distributing pamphlets, that they wished they had thousands to give away. Entering Bailieborough, and finding it market day, they rode straight into the midst of the throng, and began at once to tell the good tidings of great joy. The Methodists of the town at first wished them out of the place, but soon had their eyes opened when they saw the marvellous power with which the word preached was accompanied. A poor woman, a Romanist, professed to have found mercy; and that night, two more Catholics were awakened. On the following day the missionaries rode fifteen miles in constant rain to Cavan; and "stormed the little towns as they rode along," sounding a brief but loud call to repentance. Reaching their destination, as wet as they could be, they at once went into the midst of the fair; and, notwithstanding the unpropitious weather, the poor people gathered around them, and stood with uncovered heads, while the Lord poured out His Spirit on them as rain on the mown grass. At the close of the service, they entreated that another meeting might be held at night in the court-house, which was arranged.

At Clones, while holding up Christ to a large congregation, one of the Episcopal ministers, who was also a magistrate, came up and ordered the missionaries to be arrested and taken to the guard-house. A Mr. Jeremiah Roberts was present, and although then a very wicked man, was shocked at such unwarranted persecution. He followed the prisoners, and heard them praise God for being counted worthy to suffer for His name's sake, which so impressed his mind as to awaken him to a sense of his

own guilt; he saw himself, in comparison with these men of God, to be such a wretched miserable sinner that he could not sleep. In the meantime, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley were released, and went to the house of a Christian lady, who lived next door to Mr. Roberts. The following morning, before family worship, their kind hostess suggested that her neighbour should be invited to join them at the throne of grace. Mr. Roberts came, and before leaving the house was enabled to rest on Jesus as his Saviour. Soon afterwards he went to reside on his property at Clonandra, near Redhill, and invited the preachers to his house, which proved the means of introducing Methodism into that neighbourhood.*

But to return to the missionaries. They spent December in Fintona, Ballyshannon, Enniskillen, and the adjoining country. At Fintona, two youths, named James Robinson and Arthur Noble, were among the crowd who listened to the men with black caps. Ouseley was the preacher; his text was, "For the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" and having concluded, as his horse was passing through the crowd, he again lifted up his voice, and cried aloud, "O Fintona! Fintona! remember that on the great day you will recall to mind that a man, sitting on his horse in the street, warned you to prepare to meet your God." The youths who had been much moved by the preacher's appearance and fervour, were now overwhelmed, and led earnestly to seek the pardoning mercy of God. Both became Methodists, and subsequently, as itinerants, were greatly owned of the Lord.

The missionaries preached on two market days and one Sabbath, in the open air at Ballyshannon, to vast congregations, who listened with great attention, and there was no opposition. The rich and learned seemed astonished as they heard the servants of God denounce the judgments of Heaven against the crimes of a guilty nation. The Roman Catholics attended at place after place; nor could any person prevent them from coming out to hear. The fame of Irish preaching spread through all the country, and numbers of conversions took place. The missionaries preached in Ballintra; but the place was too small to hold

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1876, p. 189.

the people. Next morning they visited from house to house, and the Lord was so powerfully present, that the people were deeply affected, and cried aloud for mercy. From this they went to Pettigo, and preached in the street to what was called the great market. This was a blessed day to many; some could hardly refrain from crying out. The Catholics were greatly struck, and followed the servants of God that night and next morning to Mr. Scott's. They then went on to Ballinamallard and Enniskillen. The power of the Lord attended them both in public and in private, so that the meetings continued some nights five and six hours. There were two Catholic girls, as well as several others, converted to God at Mr. Armstrong's, Sidaire.

While thus the Lord blessed the work of the missionaries, others did not labour in vain. Under the ministry of Messrs. Matthew Stewart and Thomas Johnson, stationed on the Enniskillen circuit, a blessed awakening had taken place. This good work was largely in answer to the prayers of Mrs. Copeland of Lisbellaw, who had long and earnestly pleaded for a revival of the Lord's work, and at length received the assurance that God was about to pour out His Spirit abundantly. On the morning of the quarterly love-feast, she stated this to one of the preachers; and during the subsequent service, cries for mercy arose here and there through the large audience until every one present was deeply affected. Amongst those converted was William Copeland, a son of the devoted woman we have referred to, and the friend and companion of John Nelson. The awakening thus commenced soon extended over the entire circuit.

One day the missionaries unexpectedly appeared at Lisbellaw, preached out of doors, and attracted great and general attention. The village schoolmaster gave his pupils a holiday to go and hear the cavalry preachers, who were much talked about as well as stared at. The question was, "Who or what could they be?" A number of people gathered around the teacher to ascertain his opinion, which was given with such authority that many thought it must be right. "They are two discarded priests," said he, "who have taken to this way for a living!" Young Nelson had been at previous Methodist meetings, and joined the Society. He was in deep concern about his soul; the message of mercy,

which he heard in the street came with great power to his heart, and he resolved never to rest without that blessed sense of pardon and acceptance which his friend Copeland had obtained. Nor did he seek in vain; the Lord revealed Himself in mercy to his soul, and from that memorable hour his path was that of the just, which is as "the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Among others led to Christ were several members of a family named Rinchey. One night after they had returned from a meeting in Mr. Copeland's, their brother George, who was in bed, heard them speak of the blessed work that was going on; his conscience was awakened, and he resolved to go to the next service, which he did. At the close of the sermon, the preacher invited all who were seeking the Lord into another room, that they might be prayed for and receive suitable counsel. George readily availed himself of this invitation; but was two weeks under conviction of sin before he was enabled to rest on Jesus as his Saviour. Soon he began to work for Christ, being appointed a leader, and as long as strength permitted—a period of no less than sixty-five years—he continued diligently and faithfully to discharge the duties of his office, and was much acknowledged of the Lord.*

In the beginning of August, Mr. Averell set out on a tour, which continued till the close of the following month. Secular concerns called him to Aughrim, where he remained for some days; but his attention was not diverted from his Master's business, the mornings and evenings being devoted to the work of the ministry; and the Lord blessed him and made him a blessing. Thence he visited Athlone, Mullingar, Kells, Dundalk, and Newry. From the latter he went to Warrenpoint where he spent a fortnight; but though there for the benefit of his health, he did not relax his labours, preaching every day, and even visiting Kilkeel, Carlingford, and other adjoining places. At Tanderagee, there was "an immense assembly;" the Lord accompanied His word with power, and, at the love-feast, spoke in blessings to His people. The next two days were spent in "proud, Gallio-like" Portadown. Few places in the north had longer withstood the truth than this town, yet Mr. Averell

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1862, pp. 338-39.

thought truly there was even then the dawn of a better day, and that many there would hear and obey the Divine call. At Armagh, Charlemont, and Dungannon, the Lord gave him liberty and power in proclaiming the truth to large and appreciative congregations. At Mullan, he preached to a great number in his father's barn, and many hard hearts were melted into penitence. On the following day, standing on a tombstone in the churchyard, he addressed upwards of a thousand persons of all denominations, who united with great heartiness in the worship of God. The quarterly meeting in Belfast proved a memorable season, an unusually powerful influence accompanied the word preached, and the whole assembly appeared deeply moved. This hallowed feeling was still more manifest in the love-feast, when every word spoken was attended with a sacred unction.

Meanwhile a blessed revival had commenced in Newry, under noteworthy circumstances. A party in the town having intimated that the Lord had withdrawn His blessing from the Society, Mr. Wood, the superintendent, replied, "No; God has not forsaken us, but will bless us, so that twenty souls will be converted before Saturday night." How he came to speak thus he could not tell; but according to his faith it was done unto him, as just exactly a score of persons within the time stated professed to receive the remission of sins. The good work continued and spread to such an extent that at the September quarterly meeting, there was an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit of God. The cries of the penitents became so great and general that the service had to be turned into one of prayer and praise. Many of those who were anxious, formed into separate groups, while the preachers and leaders went amongst them for exhortation and prayer. Others kept by themselves, and, as if in secret before the Lord, earnestly sought His pardoning mercy. During the meeting, as well as could be ascertained, upwards of thirty were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, while within a fortnight no less than one hundred and twenty obtained the same blessing.

Long ere this Mr. M'Quigg had made a good start in the south of Ireland. In the beginning of August at Bandon, he made his first trial as a missionary. The house in which he intended

to hold the service, which belonged to a Roman Catholic, having proved too small, he took his stand under a tree, and a very large crowd assembled, some of whom expressed much satisfaction at hearing the word of God in their own language, while others wept and cried to the Lord for mercy. The next time he preached in the town, there being present many soldiers from Caithness, who did not understand English well, he addressed them in Erse, and they were much affected. Good was done.

Messrs. Joseph Anderson and William Jackson were stationed at Milltown, and in this neglected district of country had numerous and serious difficulties to encounter. The people in general were lost in the follies and superstitions of Popery, and under its baneful influence often acted in a most cruel and intolerant manner; but the Lord restrained their fury so far as His servants were concerned, who, however reviled, were preserved from injury. They also were enabled to visit some new places, and form a few societies.

Matthew Lanktree was this year appointed to Wicklow, with the venerable John Price as his colleague. Their stopping places were singularly varied, and involved intercourse with society of very different grades. At Mrs. Tighe's, Rosanna, the itinerants had richly furnished apartments, were attended by liveried servants, and met with senators, ministers, and ladies of rank and talent, while within a day or two they stopped in a mud cabin, with a little straw for a bed. Their labours were severe and incessant, but their privations and sufferings were light compared with those of many of their people, who had recently been deprived of property, homes, and dearest friends. When the servants of the Lord came to them, they received them gladly, and shared with them such provisions as they had with mournful cordiality. God blessed the visits of His messengers; several new Societies were formed; others were established and increased, and many souls were converted. Amongst these was John Rogers of Gorey, who was richly endued with Divine grace, and began to preach the Gospel with acceptance and success.

Thomas Barber was at this period on the Drogheda circuit, and among his stopping places was the house of a gardener at Collon, in the employment of the Right Hon. John Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. One day, the preacher walking in

the grounds with his host, proposed that they should pray together; and while thus engaged the Lord Lieutenant, who happened to be there at the time, and Mr. Foster, drew near the sacred spot, and heard a voice in earnest supplication. Mr. Barber pleaded for the Divine blessing to rest on the Government, then in such trying circumstances, and on the Methodists, that "they might be saved from the devil and Mr. Ruxton." "Who is this Mr. Ruxton?" said his Excellency, and was told he resided at Ardee, represented the county of Cavan in Parliament, and that he persecuted the Methodists. "And what does this prayer mean?" "Oh!" replied Mr. Foster, "this gardener of mine is one of those Methodist fellows, and I must dismiss him." "You will do no such thing," said the Lord Lieutenant. "Did you hear how he prayed for me, the Council, and the King? Indeed, these Methodists must be a loyal people. And as for Mr. Ruxton, take my compliments, and tell him I think the Methodists very good people, and that he must leave them alone." Thus that prayer put an end to the worst persecution endured in this neighbourhood; and the Divine assurance was fulfilled, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

Ireland has given a multitude of her sons to America, and from that continent have come to this country a number of evangelists, who, however erratic and unauthorized in many of their movements, have done a good work for Christ and for Methodism. The first of these was an eccentric and devoted young man, named Lorenzo Dow, who had been received on trial as a Methodist preacher, having devoted himself to a life of singular labour and self-sacrifice. Pale, thin, and somewhat consumptive looking, dressed in the plainest attire, often threadbare, his feet covered with what seemed sandals rather than shoes, and in later years wearing a long beard, and hair loosely hanging about his shoulders, his whole appearance was such as to excite the greatest interest and curiosity. Then the suddenness and promptitude of his advent in a town or village, at the very hour and minute he had appointed; the boldness with which he would attack the ruling vices of the place, which he seemed to know almost intuitively; together with the biting sarcasm and strong mother wit that pervaded his addresses, all served to invest his appearance in any vicinity, with an air of singular and romantic interest.

He was a man of fair education, with intense faith and zeal, and a remarkable knowledge of the Scriptures. Having, when under conviction of sin, passed through a desperate struggle in connection with the doctrine of unconditional election, he regarded it with special aversion, designating Calvinists by the characteristic epithet of "A double L part men;" while his earnest appeals and fervent prayers were in many instances manifestly accompanied with Divine power.

On November 27th, he landed at Larne, where he found that the Society had been scattered until a few days previously, when nine were formed into a class, one of whom kept a school, and offered him the use of her room for a service. Here a few collected to whom he preached. Thus the arrival of the strange American was noised abroad, large numbers assembled to see and hear him, and the Lord acknowledged the labours of His servant. Having remained for about two weeks in the town, Lorenzo sailed for Dublin, where he was kindly received and entertained by the first Methodist, into whose house he entered, and also assisted at services in Whitefriar street and Gravel walk chapels. Mr. Tobias, then stationed in the metropolis, gave the stranger no encouragement, and thus the chapels were soon closed against him. Other openings, however, occurred amongst the military at Chapelizod and Islandbridge, where souls were converted and classes formed. He then went to Mountmellick, and preached to large congregations; but was refused the use of the chapel, or even admission into the love-feast. We shall, however, have more to say about him again.

Towards the close of the year, Joseph Morrison, "a young man of considerable talents, and a very amiable disposition," who was supported by Mrs. Gayer, as a lay missionary, came to Ballygowan, in the county of Antrim. Here, standing on a slightly elevated rock, surrounded by some acres of what is called in the *patois* of that country, scroggs, he proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to a motley crowd of all creeds, whose moral condition was like the soil on which they stood. At the close of the service, the preacher having expressed his willingness to return if any one would kindly entertain him, Mrs. Robert Lennon, who was present, said, "If you can put up with the plain accommodation of a farmer's house, we shall be glad to see you." Her invitation was at once

accepted, and since that day Ballygowan has been a Methodist preaching place. The extensive and lasting results of this one sermon to the cause of God have been truly marvellous. Mr. and Mrs. Lennon had no less than nine daughters, as well as two sons, who all, or nearly all, in time were led to give their hearts to God. They became thoroughly identified with the Society, and, having married persons of a kindred spirit, their children and grandchildren—the Lennons, Wilsons, M'Ninches, Vances, Ritchies, Kirks, Knoxes, and others—have formed a large proportion of the Methodists on the Antrim and Ballyclare circuits.

Mr. Morrison, however, did not confine his labours in this district of country to Ballygowan. In conjunction with Mr. Thomas Holditch, a zealous and energetic local preacher, he held another open-air service at Kilwaughter, near the residence of Mr. John Ritchie, who was present with several members of his family, and also invited the servant of God to his house. Thus an additional permanent opening was obtained, where a class was soon formed. Amongst others converted here soon afterwards were two young men, whose services were prominent in this neighbourhood for many years—James Ritchie and William Caldwell. The former became a popular and laborious local preacher, who walked each Sabbath from eight to thirty miles to minister the word of life, and the latter was an acceptable leader. The descendants of both have considerably swelled the ranks of Methodism, both in Ireland and America.* On account of having joined the Society James Ritchie was refused admittance to the Lord's table in the meeting-house he was in the habit of attending; but subsequently the minister who acted with such intolerance, saw his error, and learned to respect the man he had so greatly wronged.

The blessed revival at Newry extended to the surrounding country. The preachers on the adjoining circuits, encouraged by what they heard of the success of the Lord's work, set apart a day for fasting and prayer, and also arranged to assist each other in special services. Messrs. Hurley and Crozier thus came to the help of the brethren on the Charlemont circuit. On

* Mr. Caldwell was grandfather of the Rev. J. H. Caldwell, Methodist Episcopal Church, America, whose devoted partner of late rendered valuable service to Irish Methodism.

Saturday, December 28th, the quarterly meeting was held at Armagh. Mr. Hurley preached; the word was accompanied with unwonted power, and at the love-feast such was the gracious influence realized that no less than thirty persons were converted. On the following morning Mr. Crozier preached, intending to leave at the close of the service, but such was the manifestation of the Divine presence, that the meeting was continued the whole day, during which about twenty-eight obtained peace with God. On the 30th, the itinerants went to Charlemont, where they witnessed similar scenes of reviving and converting power, forty souls being led to decide for the Lord. Next day the quarterly meeting was held at Newry, and continued until after midnight. Mr. Thomas Brown preached a powerful sermon, and the whole congregation presented a most affecting appearance, as shouts of joy and songs of praise, mingled with earnest cries for mercy. At least twenty accepted Christ as their Saviour. Thus the eighteenth century closed in this country amid scenes of hallowed and glorious triumph, "the Lord working with His servants, and confirming the word with signs following."

CHAPTER XIII.

1800.

ON January 1st, 1800, the annual breakfast-meeting, in Whitefriar street chapel, Dublin, proved a season of much spiritual blessing. The reports were most cheering, especially in reference to the spiritual state of the Society, as the services had been well attended, a considerable addition had been made to the membership, and there was amongst the people in general a spirit of prayer and earnest expectation.

On the day of the above meeting, Messrs. Hurley, Thomas Brown, Crozier, and Ridgeway, set out from Newry for Bluestone, where they met Messrs. Gustavus Armstrong and Alexander Sturgeon. Mr. Brown entered the pulpit to preach, but during the first prayer, the Spirit of God descended with such power, that the service was at once turned into a prayer-meeting, and fifty souls were led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross. Next day the brethren separated, but the Lord accompanied them each, and night after night, in town and country, God's people were quickened and souls were saved. At one meeting in Tanderagee no less than sixty were converted to God, and at another service held by Mr. Brown, he was so overwhelmed with the Divine presence that he sank on the floor before the people. When lifted up, his first words were, "Lord, I cannot pray, but I can praise."*

The first quarter of this year was spent by Messrs. Graham and Ouseley in Ulster, where their labours were crowned with marvellous success. They preached to thousands in the streets and fields, the fairs and markets; and the power of the Lord accompanied His word everywhere, so that large numbers were converted, including many Róman Catholics. At Newtownstewart,

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 107-8.

the Romanists came forward, weeping, to entreat the missionaries to lay their hands on their heads and bless them. At Fivemiletown, one hundred and fifty persons were led to join the Society.

Such was the success of these devoted evangelists in the north, that they concluded Clones would be a better centre for their work than Sligo, and accordingly prepared to remove thither. But before their departure, Mr. Ouseley resolved to make another attack upon the "dire apostasy." Although the priests wielded great power in preventing their people from attending the services, on this occasion, contrary to expectations, a crowd of Catholics were present, and listened quietly, while the missionary proved that they were deceived by their teachers, and had not the doctrines taught by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans. Mr. Graham then besought them to look to Him, who alone could grant what they all wanted, real happiness. The power of the Lord accompanied the word, and the hearts of many were melted. The missionaries had not laboured in vain in Sligo, for many holy lives and happy deaths in and around the town, from that day to the present, have borne a constant and accumulating testimony to the blessing with which God crowned their efforts.

On May 1st, Graham started for his new home, leaving Ouseley behind him for a few days; and preached at Manorhamilton, his first stopping place. God made the service a blessing to others, as well as himself, all the hearers being greatly affected. He then went on to Clones, and on the following day, being the Sabbath, proclaimed in the market-house the unsearchable riches of Christ, when "some souls were set at liberty." At Roslea, though alone in a place of ill-repute, the Lord stood by him, and the people gave an attentive hearing. The priest came into the crowd, warned his flock of the danger of listening to such teaching, and threatened to curse all who did not instantly withdraw; but the people in general remained and said, "The man is good, and what he says is true." Many were deeply moved, and a marked moral reformation resulted. The Catholics followed the missionary to Mr. Whitley's, Gola, where numbers had to stand without, the house being so crowded.

Meanwhile Ouseley preached again in the streets of Sligo on the Sunday which occurred during the separation of the

missionaries; and also at Lisbellaw, and Maguiresbridge, *en route* to Clones, joining his companion at Gola. Here they had announced a service, to attend which the people assembled in large numbers long before the appointed time, and were addressed with characteristic fervour by our old friend Bartley Campbell. Then Mr. Graham preached, and Mr. Ouseley followed, exhorting all to come at once to Jesus. Amongst those present, who were awakened to serious concern, was a Roman Catholic young man, named Patrick Connolly, who subsequently became a most devoted Christian.*

The following day the missionaries proceeded to Smithborough; numbers collected to hear, and showers of blessing descended on them. In the evening a meeting was held at Mr. Joseph Mitchell's, where were many Seceders, who, as Graham says, "had been preached to death by long harangues;" and at the close of the out-door service a prayer-meeting was conducted in a barn. The people could not restrain their feelings, there was much weeping, some piercing cries for mercy; and soon on every side was heard the voice of praise and thanksgiving. Thence the missionaries went to Monaghan; and a large audience assembled, some of whom seemed stunned, and others were bathed in tears, while two or three clergymen tried in vain to turn the scene into sport. As the missionaries left, Romanists ran after them, eagerly inquiring when they would return. Next day they were again at Smithborough, preaching to a multitude of all denominations, and on withdrawing to the house, the servants of God could not be heard on account of the loud and bitter wail of distress that arose. Graham quaintly remarks, "I doubt not that we have left enough for priests and ministers to do for a while." One of the latter had challenged a preacher to dispute on the question of the decrees; but now they had other subjects to occupy their attention, "a great number having been truly converted to God."

At Newbliss, many were cut to the heart; at Clones, there were upwards of one thousand hearers, and the word proved quick and powerful; and again at Newbliss, the scene was most affecting, as young and old, husbands and wives, rejoiced together

* For an exceedingly interesting account of the conversion and experience of Connolly, see *Irish Evangelist*, 1861, pp. 153 and 162.

in the pardoning mercy of God. The poor Romanists followed the missionaries out of Ballybay, earnestly desiring further instruction; and about fifteen hundred attended the service in Rockcorry, where there were several cases in which spiritual sorrow was accompanied by physical prostration, such as took place on a large scale in Ulster during the revival of 1859. At Cootehill, the Presbyterian meeting-house was kindly placed at the disposal of the evangelists, and there was a large congregation. The missionaries then went to Cavan, where they had a still more numerous audience, including a number of the Tipperary militia, who listened with wonder to the glad tidings of salvation; and the Lord applied His word to many hearts. Referring to these labours in general, Graham says, "It is impossible to give a full account of the great work now going on; and anything to equal the conversions from Romanism I scarcely ever read."

The south also was not without special tokens of the Divine blessing. Mr. Averell spent the month of February in visiting some of the principal places in the counties of Wicklow, Wexford, and Waterford, and on Saturday, March 1st, arrived at Cork. On the following day he preached to large congregations; and a gracious influence accompanied the word. The members of the Society here who had been long remarkable for their piety, not only retained their fervour, but were growing in grace, while the spirit of hearing which had prevailed amongst the people of the city, also continued to increase. During Mr. Averell's visit there were some very blessed seasons of refreshing, especially one in the French church, on the evening before leaving. After preaching, a prayer-meeting was held, which continued for several hours; the Spirit of God was poured out, cries for mercy arose from every part of the house, and many were enabled to rejoice in the Lord.

Having visited Inishannon, Mr. Averell proceeded to Bandon, where the Lord revived His work in a most glorious manner. Having preached on the evening of March 8th, the evangelist held a prayer-meeting, which continued two hours, during which six were brought into the liberty of the children of God. On Sunday he had very crowded congregations, and the word was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." After preaching in the

evening, while he met the Society and many of the congregation, a blessed influence seemed to melt every heart into tenderness; but at the prayer-meeting which followed, no language could describe the effects produced by the mighty operations of God's Spirit. The cries of some of the broken-hearted were heard at a considerable distance; many groaned in spirit, and several wept as if in secret before God; while not a few rejoiced in the Lord. The inhabitants of the town were so alarmed by the noise, that numbers came to the preaching-house to see what was the matter, and appeared lost in astonishment at the scene that presented itself. In one part of the house they sang, in another they prayed, and elsewhere they exhorted; some prostrate on the floor cried aloud for mercy, and others with sacred joy praised Him who had set their captive souls at liberty. One of the Society, who had been greatly opposed to such enthusiasm, as he termed it, remained at the meeting to see the folly of the people. While he was hardening himself in his opposition to the work of God, his son, who, unknown to him, was among the penitents, having obtained mercy, arose and gave glory to God who had washed him from his sins in His precious blood. The father stood as if confounded, and then, with a flood of tears, embracing his son, acknowledged that what he had regarded as enthusiasm he now believed to be of the Lord. On this memorable occasion, about thirty were made partakers of the pardoning love of God.

The next day was equally memorable. Mr. Averell preached in the morning, and then met the Society. "In the evening," he says, "the Lord gave me great freedom in addressing a densely filled house, and accompanied His own word with heavenly power. After preaching I administered the Lord's supper to about three hundred communicants, under an influence from on high, productive of effects that I cannot attempt to describe. Great grace rested upon the people, but they were not satisfied; many still were athirst for salvation. While at prayer, every heart was moved; and it was soon ascertained that some had found peace with God. These were asked to tell what the Lord had done for their souls; and the artless relation of His dealings with them was accompanied with an unction of which I can give no conception. After this the penitents were invited to come together to one part of the house, that we might pray for them, and give them suitable

advice ; and an immediate movement was perceptible throughout the assembly. Men and women, young and old, rich and poor, pressed towards the appointed place ; and it was most affecting to see the ways in which they expressed their heart-rending distress. We deeply sympathized in their anxiety, and continued in prayer till midnight. At the close of the meeting, twenty-seven persons publicly testified that they had obtained a sense of their acceptance with God ; and I doubt not but many others were blessed who did not acknowledge it."

On Tuesday, Messrs. Averell, Dinnen, Stuart, Deery, and Howe went to Bengour, where they were welcomed by Mr. John Welply. Mr. Averell preached at noon, and got one seal to his ministry. In the evening at Rushfield, where he again preached, the Lord graciously made bare His arm, and four souls found peace and joy in believing.

Next morning, says Dinnen, the prayer-meeting exceeded anything he ever saw for the number present. Twelve persons were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. One sister aloud gave thanks to God who had heard and answered the prayers she had been offering for twelve years for the conversion of her children ; and the congregation united with her in praising the Lord for His wonderful grace.

Being persuaded that it was the will of God that they should go forward and storm the strongholds of Satan, the evangelists proceeded to Dunmanway, a town that had little of the life of religion. That evening and the next morning they had large congregations, and the word was with power, but none professed conversion. They then pressed over the mountain to Glandore. This place had been proof against the Gospel for some years ; but now the Lord was entreated, stout-hearted sinners were melted down, and a class of fifteen members formed.

The following morning the evangelists had a very blessed meeting in Castletownsend ; and at Skibbereen in the evening, the court-house being crowded, the Lord gave such effect to His word that many sought and obtained forgiveness of sins. On Saturday morning there was a wonderful service in a cabin at Baltimore. Mr. Averell could not finish his sermon on account of the deep distress of some penitents ; and, having continued in prayer for nearly three hours, six were enabled to believe unto salvation. At

the meeting that night, in Mr. Evans' of Ardraly, several were deeply convinced of sin, and ten made happy in the Lord.

The next day, Sunday, March 16th, Mr. Averell preached to nearly four hundred persons in a large granary at Aghadown. At the prayer-meeting "the cries of the penitents were deafening;" but having engaged to go to Lisheenacrehig in the evening, the evangelists were reluctantly obliged to close the service. In the homely cabin of Mr. Talbot, Mr. Dinnen preached with much unction, and fourteen were enabled to rejoice in God.

On Monday the servants of the Lord went to Ballydehob to hold a love-feast; and such a Patrick's-day this village had never witnessed. Approaching the place, they saw people coming from all quarters, and felt impressed they would have a glorious day. The house in which they met consisted of a hall with a large room on each side and a similar space upstairs. They intended to occupy the larger of the lower apartments; but the congregation filled every part of the house. Mr. Averell stood in the hall; and during the sermon the cries for mercy became so general that the love-feast had to be abandoned and a prayer-meeting held. No adequate idea could be formed of the scene which followed. Such were the cries of the people that the ground seemed to shake under them. The preachers and leaders at length separated, and held distinct meetings in the different apartments. Meanwhile, two brethren, who could speak Irish, addressed in that language a multitude outside the house, most of whom were Romanists; and they listened with great attention, many being deeply affected. After continuing the meetings until the persons conducting them were nearly exhausted, they dismissed the people—inviting those who obtained mercy, and all who were earnestly seeking it, to reassemble in the large room, which was soon crowded. At the close of the prayer-meeting here, which lasted about two hours, it appeared that at least sixty persons were made happy in the Lord. Mr. Averell's text on this occasion was—"Turn ye at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you." And, verily, the Lord did pour out His Spirit in a blessed manner. Writing afterwards about it, this eminent missionary said, "Oh brother! never did any now living, I believe, see such a day as this in Ireland! It seemed in one sense as the day of judgment, when the penitents were crying for mercy, but it was surely the day of

salvation—and that they proclaimed with all their powers, when God shone upon their souls.”

The following morning the preachers returned to Dunmanway, where they found that the Lord had so blessed the labours of the leaders, since their visit, that thirty souls had been converted in the course of seven days. On Thursday, having accompanied Mr. Averell to Macroom, Messrs. Dinnen and Stuart returned to Bandon. Thus closed a most remarkable missionary tour, during which two hundred and fifty souls obtained salvation. Poor and rich, profane and moral, the determined scoffer and the sober inquirer, Romanist and Protestant, indiscriminately fell beneath the mighty power of God.

After the preachers had left for the west, the meetings were continued in Bandon, and at them all the power of the Lord was present to heal. A local correspondent wrote to Matthew Lanktree:—“The Society in the town, which was about seventy in number two years ago, already amounts to two hundred and seventy members, and is increasing rapidly; the flame has spread itself through all the western circuit, so that it is little else than a nation ‘born in a day.’ This great work is particularly effected by prayer-meetings, to which God grants the indubitable seal of His approbation, by converting many souls to Himself.”

When Mr. Dinnen returned, after an absence of nine days, his colleague, Andrew Taylor, told him that fifty souls had been converted in his absence. After examining the Society he found that the Lord was deepening His work in the hearts of the new converts, and they were continuing to evidence it by their tempers and lives.

Mr. Stuart, on his return to Cork, gave an account of his evangelistic tour, which made a profound impression; and arrangements were at once made for holding special prayer-meetings. These were attended by vast numbers; and greatly acknowledged of God in the quickening of His people and the salvation of sinners. Often after the Benediction was pronounced, many remained prostrate on the floor, earnestly crying for mercy, and refusing to leave until God for Christ’s sake had pardoned their sins; while the artless simplicity and fervour with which the young converts told what the Lord had done for their souls was truly affecting. Thus the blessed work of grace spread far and wide, east and west.

Mr. Averell having visited Mallow, went on to Kilfinnane, where he had a season of refreshing amongst the simple and pious Palatines. In Pallaskenry, at a love-feast, seven souls were born of God ; and in Limerick, during several days spent there, he saw precious fruit to his labour. He next visited Cloughjordan, where five were made partakers of the pardoning mercy of God ; and at the quarterly meeting in Mountrath, seven were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. On the two succeeding days love-feasts were held in Maryborough and Abbeyleix ; at the former ten were brought into the enjoyment of the Divine favour, and at the latter fifteen more were assured of the same blessing.

Meantime Lorenzo Dow, having early in the year returned to Ulster, travelled about holding services ; his greatest success being in the county of Antrim. At Larne, the Society, which at his former visit had almost ceased to exist, was now increased to sixty members. At Island Magee, he formed a class, notwithstanding much prejudice and hostility in this stronghold of Calvinism. At Doagh, the officers of the guard would not permit the meeting that had been announced to be held, but there were services on the following day, which, in consequence, were more largely attended, and thus good was done. A gracious work of awakening began at Kilwaughter, which led to the conversion of many. Great numbers including several Deists, assembled at Carrickfergus, and the power of the Lord was present to heal. In Belfast, Lorenzo held numerous services in the open air, for which he was arrested and sent to jail ; but as Andrew Hamilton, junr., interfered on his behalf, stating to the authorities that preaching in the street was a privilege allowed to the Methodists by Government, and that the object of the young man was good, he was liberated, after having seized the opportunity of proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to his fellow-prisoners. He then returned to the south, where he spent the spring in labouring chiefly in Queen's county and Wexford.

As the first twelve months of the labours of the general missionaries approached a termination, they began to look forward to Conference. They had both sown in tears and reaped in joy, and the final efforts of the year were still attended with blessing. On June 28th, Graham writes from Clones : "The whole country is in a flame. The Lord is truly doing great things ; such an

outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplication I have never witnessed before." At Belturbet, "numbers of ladies and gentlemen" were amongst the audience, and were astonished to hear the people cry for mercy. It is not said that any of the great ones believed; but that they thought the missionaries would be a great blessing to the country. Here also a love-feast was held, at which numerous strangers remained, and not a few conversions took place. At Ballyhaise, "many Catholics were cut to the heart, and some justified." On July 12th, at Clones, a vast number of Orangemen were in the audience. Next day, being the Sabbath, it was announced the evangelists would preach in the open air, somewhere in the adjoining country, so a vast multitude assembled beforehand in the church. A week previously, the clergyman had expressed a wish that the missionaries would come, for his preaching seemed to do the people no good; but now, as a young man in his congregation either fainted or was struck, the minister cried out, "Take him away; I will have no irregularity in my church; and if these strangers are my parishioners, I wonder that I never saw them here before. But if they are following these cavalry preachers, I wish they had remained at home in their own churches. Let no one say that I invited them." The cavalry preachers were soon on the spot, and delivered their message to some four thousand people. At Cavan, the missionaries were assisted by Messrs. Joseph Armstrong and George Brown, and the word was accompanied with much power. At Oldcastle, their host, Mr. Henry, expressed the happiness it afforded him to see so many Roman Catholics awakened to a sense of their state, and calling on God for mercy. It is said that some of these remained on their knees for hours without apparent weariness. From Oldcastle the missionaries went to Dublin, and there were refreshed in spirit, and caused their brethren to rejoice by telling them how mightily the word of the Lord grew and prevailed.

The Conference met on July 18th; the president being, as usual, Dr. Coke, who had just returned from America, and Mr. J. Kerr, secretary. Six candidates were received on trial, including John Foster, Robert Bailey, Joseph Morrison, William Stewart, William Robertson, and David Waugh. Of these the most illustrious was William Stewart, a native of Ashfield, near Cootehill, who had removed to Dublin, and preached with great

acceptance, giving promise of his subsequent brilliant and useful career. There were reported two deaths : David Gordon, "a man of sincere devotion, good sense, and pleasing address;" and Archibald Montgomery, who had died in the full triumph of faith.

The case of Lorenzo Dow, who had come to the city, was considered; and Dr. Coke offered to send him as a missionary to Halifax or Quebec; but this proposal the American declined to accept. There being a strong feeling that to permit any man to travel through the country, under the apparent sanction of the Society, and yet not under its control, was a serious responsibility which the Conference should not undertake, it was agreed that no countenance should be shown the stranger.

There was reported an increase of more than three thousand members; and the testimony of the brethren, whose circuits had been visited by the missionaries, showed that no small portion of this good fruit was due, directly or indirectly, to their blessed toil. But the numbers added to the Society were only the proof, not the sum of the total good done; for very many to whom God had made the missionaries a blessing, never became Methodists, but spread Divine life in other branches of the Church. So great had been the success of the general mission, that three additional brethren were set apart for this particular kind of evangelistic labour. These included Messrs. Lawrence Kane and Henry Webb, who seem to have offered themselves for this special work, but were not received even as preachers on trial, and Mr. James Bell.

After Conference, Dr. Coke appears to have made his annual tour through the country; the only trace of which we now find is an entry in the Cork steward's book, of money paid to meet expenses in connection with his visit to the city.*

In the autumn, the Rev. John M'Clure visited Dublin to establish a branch of the New Connexion. He commenced services in the Weaver's-hall, attracted considerable congregations, and formed a society, which kept together for years, amidst reproaches and difficulties, having no preachers except those whom God raised up among themselves. Societies of the New Connexion also existed at

* *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1833, p. 519.

this time in Bangor, Newtownards, Belfast, Knockbreckan, Lisburn, Milltown, Broomhedge, Maze, Kilwarlin, Magheragall, Moyrusk, Priesthill, and several other places. On one occasion at Knockbreckan, several young men gave annoyance during the service; and when Mr. McClure left to go home, made an attack on him, pelting him with turf. Having met with no resistance, they resolved to repeat their shameful conduct; but several persons in the adjoining village of Newtownbreda, who heard of it, determined to protect the servant of God. So when the preacher next proceeded to this appointment, on seeing him, a nailmaker quitted his work, called on a number of his fellow tradesmen to accompany him, and, taking their hammers in their pockets, went to the place of meeting. During the sermon, the rowdies commenced their proceedings by pinching a young woman, who started up with a scream, at which a loud laugh was raised. Instantly the nailers stood up and drew their weapons, while their leader declared that if any person gave annoyance, he would bury his hammer in his skull. "Now, boys," said the preacher, "keep quiet, and we'll do you no harm." And quiet as mice they did keep, and never afterwards offered any violence to the preaching of the word in that neighbourhood.

At the latter end of August, Mr. Averell set out on an evangelistic tour in the north, which occupied nearly the remainder of the year. At Cootehill, he preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house to a large congregation, most of whom appeared disposed to profit by the word, and several were deeply affected. He spent a Sabbath at Clones, where there were numerous audiences, and cheering tokens of the Divine presence. Never before, he says, did he witness so much of the spirit of religion in the Society. On visiting Monaghan, he was greatly encouraged, not only by the religious improvement of the people, but also in seeing fruit to his labours. Travelling northward, at Fivemiletown, he addressed a vast concourse of people in the open air; and the Lord opened the windows of heaven, and poured out an abundant blessing. A great multitude also assembled at Brookeborough, to about five hundred of whom he administered the Lord's supper. Proceeding on his tour, he visited Maguiresbridge, Lisbellaw, Enniskillen, Sidaire, and Ballinamallard, in nearly all of which he preached

in the open air; and many at the services were enabled to rejoice in a sense of sins forgiven.

He next entered the county of Donegal, and in the parts which he visited, saw the arm of the Lord revealed in the salvation of souls. At Pettigo, he preached out of doors to upwards of one thousand people; and during the prayer-meeting which followed, eight souls professed to have been born of God. At Ballyshannon next day, the power of the Lord was again manifested; His word was accompanied with a gracious influence; and during the love-feast six persons were made happy in the love of Christ. Thence, the evangelist went to Ballintra, where he preached out of doors, and afterwards held a love-feast, which he says was the most extraordinary he had ever seen. Not more than three or four persons had an opportunity of speaking, when "the Lord descended, and the mountains flowed at His presence: every heart was affected, and cries for mercy arose on every hand." Prayer was offered; and the Lord heard, revealing Himself to not less than thirty persons as a sin-pardoning God. Rathmelton also was highly favoured; the Lord made His word quick and powerful, and at the Sacrament richly dispensed the bread of life. So overwhelming was the sense of the Divine presence, that many fell on the floor, apparently lifeless, and having remained in this state for some time, rose and glorified God, some for the pardon of sin, and others for sanctifying grace.

Mr. Averell now reached Londonderry, where he spent a happy Sabbath in ministering the word of life to larger congregations and a more devoted Society than he had previously seen in the city. Strabane, Newtownstewart, and Omagh were next visited, and in each he found tokens of growing prosperity. At Omagh, he preached to a numerous audience in the church; and then held a love-feast in the court-house, at which was manifested much of the life and power of religion.

Lisleen partook largely of the showers of blessing which at this time refreshed the country. Amongst the many converted were John Johnston of Ardbarren, who for more than half a century proved a most laborious and conscientious leader; and Charles McCormick, who when a child had been taken by his mother to the Methodist chapel, and heard Mr. Wesley preach.

His conversion was remarkable, and illustrates his natural temperament. One dark night, while on his way to a prayer-meeting, he saw in the distance a great light, as if of a house on fire. It turned out, however, to be a lime-kiln, the fearful heat and lurid glare of which, amid the darkness, suggested to his mind, with all the vividness of reality, the sufferings of the lost, "the smoke of whose torments ascendeth up for ever and ever." Then and there he resolved to seek deliverance from the impending danger, and did not rest until he could say in all truthfulness,

" My soul through my Redeemer's care,
 Saved from the second death I feel,
 My eyes from tears of dark despair,
 My feet from falling into hell."

He at once joined the Society, from that time was in mind and heart a thorough Methodist, and soon was called out into active service.*

But to return to Mr. Averell. At Garvagh, he thought there was little prospect of good, so many sects being in the town that simple-minded seekers after Jesus knew not where to find Him. The evangelist spent several days in Coleraine, and remarks, concerning the members there, that they excelled all the kingdom, except the Dublin Society, "in religious conversation." During his visit the congregations in the town-hall were large, the Lord accompanied His word with power, and the love-feast and sacramental services were greatly owned, several persons being enabled to lay hold on Christ for salvation. Accompanied by Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Averell went to Ballymena, and preached to a numerous audience. "Such," he says, "was the love of the people here to the preachers, and to each other, that all were invited to breakfast together; and it was truly a feast of love; God was in the midst of us."

The route of the servant of the Lord next included Glenarm, Larne, and Carrickfergus, in which there was little of a cheering character; but in Belfast the cause prospered, and he preached to large congregations. Proceeding onward, Mr. Averell preached at Willmount, Lisburn, Ballinderry, Moira, Lurgan, and Portadown. He had also contemplated a visit to the Lloyd family at Tamnagh-

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1864, p. 13.

more, but effected more than he had intended. Mr. John Galt, having obtained from him a copy of his plan, had it published in a Belfast paper. The announcement, of course, stated that he would preach in all the places mentioned. When Mr. Averell saw this, he feared that the Lloyds, with whom he had no acquaintance, would conclude he had taken an unwarranted liberty, and therefore he thought of not calling upon them. But when the day announced arrived, he considered it better to call and explain how the mistake had occurred. On his arrival, he found, to his inexpressible relief, Mr. Lloyd busily employed in fitting up a large barn for the service, and also received a most cordial welcome. He preached in the evening to a very numerous audience; the word of the Lord was accompanied with much power, and the seed of Divine truth then sown brought forth fruit. From that time the preachers were most hospitably entertained by Mr. Lloyd; his house was a regular preaching place, and a large class was formed, of which he became the efficient leader.

On August 1st, Graham and Ouseley appeared in the tholsel, Drogheda, calling an attentive throng to repentance. Next day they were at Ardee, Graham being ill, and Ouseley at work in the street. At Kingscourt, among many Roman Catholics, one intelligent young man was smitten with such deep conviction of sin, that he cried aloud, and continued to do so until his sorrow was turned into joy, and then he publicly expressed his gratitude for ever having heard these servants of the Lord. At Shercock, the Protestant clergyman attended the service. A Roman Catholic shopkeeper said, that "the man who would pin his faith to the sleeve of a priest, deserved to be lost;" and his wife told the missionaries the people had heard of them, and been afraid they would not come there. Thus from place to place the evangelists pursued their course, almost everywhere signs of awakening and conversion following. At Clones, the curate, who held the commission of the peace, said he would not allow them to preach in the street. The missionaries then visited the surrounding country, and had many hearers; some of whom that expected to have a laugh at the penitents, were themselves pricked in their hearts and cried aloud for mercy. One man who was wont to swear for a wager, was smitten to the ground, and "roared by reason of the disquietness of his heart." At Kilmore, many believed; and, adds

Graham, "This country is on fire; travelling preachers, local preachers, leaders, and hearers, are flaming with zeal for the glory of God." Next day at Castleblayney fair, a large crowd, most of whom were Romanists, heard the word with joy, and soon "there was a shaking" on every side, as the Lord accompanied His word with power to their hearts. At a second meeting the poor Catholics smote on their breasts and, crying aloud for mercy, wept bitterly. On the following Sabbath, as no house in the neighbourhood could contain the people, permission was given to hold the service in Lord Blayney's demesne; and there the Spirit of God descended so mightily, that the people fell on their knees during the preaching of the word, and with one voice cried aloud to God. At Monaghan, large numbers of Roman Catholics, as well as others, heard the word, and were powerfully affected.

On the Ballinamallard circuit, while Mr. Joseph Armstrong was in company with the missionaries, they met a wedding-party near a chapel, in which the priest was waiting for it, and they spoke affectionately to the young couple, urging them to seek union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Then Ouseley alighted from his horse to pray, and the others joined him. So the three preachers, with the wedding-party kneeling on the road around them, prayed earnestly, while tears flowed, and the impatient priest peeped from behind the half-opened chapel door.

Early in October, the missionaries returned to Clones, where they had resolved to preach in the streets, notwithstanding the prohibition of the clerical magistrate. Some of the friends thought it right they should in the first instance wait on him, and explain their position, which they did, but in vain, as he was resolved to carry out his threat. Nothing daunted, the servants of God took their stand out of doors, and when Graham was in the middle of his discourse, he was rudely interrupted by the rector and curate. After a lengthened altercation, Ouseley ascended a block, and began to preach; the rector shouted, "Call out the army!" and a captain appeared followed by his men. Immediately some of the yeomen ran for their firearms; and the magistrate, seeing that this might lead to blood, ordered the soldiers back, and running up to the preacher pulled him down. Graham at once started up, took his companion's place, and proceeded

with the service. The curate thought to pull him down also, but found himself unequal to the task; and thus the meeting ended in peace.

The missionaries then journeyed northward. At Caledon, they preached in the fair, and found it difficult to reach the hearts of their hearers; but in the evening the Lord came to their help, and the hammer of the word broke the rocks in pieces. Next morning the Spirit was poured out so abundantly, that old and young were deeply moved. At Charlemont, some officers resolved to have fun out of the "Black-caps," but most of them soon felt ashamed. One, however, said, "I charge you not to preach in the street any more. Your doctrine is very good, but you make such a — noise that the whole town is annoyed." Ouseley replied, "We do make a noise, but ours is a hallowed noise." At Loughgall, two men in authority declared that if they came there they would send them to —; but neither the parson nor colonel could stand the power with which the servants of God spake. At Armagh, they say that all came to hear except the rich; and at Portadown they had a numerous and attentive audience. A Roman Catholic woman, at Bluestone, avowed she had been in company with twelve priests, but had never heard this way of salvation before. The visit of the missionaries to Lisburn proved the means of a gracious revival. Amongst others converted was an avowed Deist. Soon afterwards, as Mrs. Johnson was engaged in prayer, and about to implore a blessing on his behalf, she was stopped by such a powerful apprehension of the presence of his spirit in a purer and happier state, as filled her with awe. Subsequently she learned that he, at that time, passed in the triumph of faith to the home above. At Lurgan, Tanderagee, Killyleagh, Hillsborough, and Market-hill, the power of the Lord was present at the services, and many realized its healing efficacy.

The missionaries then appear to have gone up to Dublin, probably to meet Dr. Coke; and as they returned to Ulster, preached in the street of Rathmolyon; and the poor Romanists who at first stood at a distance, drew near, and appeared much awakened. In Mr. Fox's that night, the greater part of the congregation were Catholics; the power of the Lord descended; and "Such a time," says Graham, "I never had known in this place;" some of the Romanists professed to feel the love of God in their

hearts. In Athboy, "that benighted town," the missionaries called at the house of a friend, the only man who knew any thing of religion in the place. Mr. Ouseley then sounded an alarm in the street, and called the people to prayer; the place filled; and many who could not come in knelt outside the windows, and were bathed in tears. At Mr. Henry's of Oldcastle, the Catholics flocked to hear; and the Lord blessed His word to them. Next day, being the market, the evangelists stood in the street, and the poor Romanists seemed as much athirst for the word as the gaping land for the falling rain; some of them followed the servants of God to Mr. Henry's; and it was most affecting to see how they fell on their knees, and looked up to heaven for mercy. A large number of the country Catholics waited in town for the service that night, nor did they wait in vain; for many were awakened, and some converted. From Oldcastle the missionaries went to Ballyjamesduff, and preached in the meeting-house. If ever the presence of the Lord filled the place, it did so this night; some Romanists attended, and the hearts of all became as wax before the fire. Next day in the market the Catholics were very attentive, and followed the evangelists out of town, where they preached again; many were cut to the heart and awakened out of their long sleep of sin.

Thence the servants of God went to Clones, where Graham took sick, and Ouseley made another attempt to preach in the open air. While he read a portion of Scripture, both the rector and curate came up, and ordered him to desist. He gently remonstrated with them, but they threatened to arrest him if he did not immediately comply. He replied that as he broke no law, human or Divine, and caused neither disturbance nor obstruction, he must beg them not to interrupt him. They withdrew, but soon returned with a band of soldiers, who took him to the guard-house. The crowd swelled in numbers, followed, and stood before the place, while he went to one of the windows, and continued his discourse until removed, by order of the rector, to the back of the house. Here he was detained till evening, and then released without any application on his part. When liberated he preached to vast congregations both out of doors and in the chapel; and many were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. Although the servant of the Lord triumphed, the opposition

thus encountered from some of the Episcopal clergy, here and elsewhere, compelled many of the preachers, however reluctantly, to take out licences as Dissenters. Thus they availed themselves of the benefits of the Toleration Act, and prevented clerical opponents taking advantage of the Act against Conventicles.

Mr. Ouseley then spent some days on the Cavan circuit, during which twenty-four persons found redemption in the blood of the Lamb, including at least four Romanists. Amongst others, a father, who had not spoken to his daughter for months, because she had renounced Popery, literally fell on the floor in bitter anguish, and after earnest prayer had been offered on his behalf, rose up, and embracing his child, kissed her, and wept aloud. Some were converted, says Ouseley, who had been like devils before. On the Sabbath, he preached in a ball-room, where there had often been the sound of revelry, but now the cries of penitents filled the place; and, amongst others, the owner and his family turned to the Lord.

Mr. Graham joined his brother missionary, and they had another great week together on the Ballyconnell circuit. Two months previously, through the labours of Mr. Pedlow, a blessed awakening had commenced at Corlisbrattan, which soon spread through the surrounding country; and now souls were converted every day, in such numbers that they could not well be counted. Many Romanists heard the missionaries, and some were made happy in God. At Swanlinbar, the vastness of the congregation, the eager attention with which they listened, and the loud lamentations of many were felt by the missionaries to be overwhelming. No less than thirty were converted during the love-feast at Drumbullion.*

Mr. Joseph Armstrong, in describing the work on his circuit, says, that during the thirty-one years he had been connected with Methodism, and witnessed many revivals, he had never seen such a deep and general awakening. Frequently in preaching he was compelled to cease by loud and earnest cries of distress, while such was the anxiety of the penitents, that they often wrestled with God for pardoning mercy until the break of day. The December quarterly meeting at Ballinamallard, at which both

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1802, p. 38.

the missionaries were present, was "like the day of Pentecost." On the day following, being the Sabbath, immediately after the close of the Church service, the itinerants commenced their meeting, which continued until far on in the night. Amongst others converted was a young man afflicted with cancer, which was to have been cut out on the following day; but the Lord in mercy healed both body and soul, and thus rendered the operation unnecessary.* Meetings were subsequently held at Carn, Kesh, Pettigo, Lowtherstown, Trillick, Togherdoo, and Dromore, and in each of these places the word of God was accompanied with converting power. At Kesh, a clerical magistrate, who had bitterly opposed the work, heard for himself, was convinced of his error, and sought a private and friendly interview with Graham. At Pettigo, the members of a family residing in a house near where the missionaries stood, heard the word preached, were aroused to a sense of their sinfulness, and on a class being formed, at once gave in their names as candidates for membership. At Trillick, the people cried aloud for mercy in the open street; and at the close of the service many of them followed the servants of God to the house of John Funston, where they wept, and prayed, and rejoiced together until midnight. At Dromore, a vast crowd of Romanists, as well as Protestants, attended, and the number awakened to serious concern led to the formation of a society there.†

The work also prospered greatly on the Enniskillen circuit. In December, Mr. George Brown preached at the house of Mrs. Frances Russell, Drumbad More, and was assisted at the after service by his wife. Seven persons were led to decide for God, including a young man named Edward Robinson, who in the fulness of his joy, shouted "Victory, through the blood of the Lamb!" A few years later, he removed to Belfast, where for nearly forty years he occupied a useful and prominent position in the Society. At the quarterly meeting in Enniskillen, at which the missionaries were present, a woman, named Sally McManus, seemed to be possessed by an evil spirit. She screamed in the wildest manner, five men could not hold her down; and the more the servants of God prayed for her, the more she raged. At

* Unpublished Gleanings of Methodism in Fermanagh.

† *Methodist Magazine*, 1801, pp. 543-44.

length the Lord was entreated on her behalf; and having lain for some moments as if dead, she arose and praised God for His mercy. Another Catholic on obtaining a sense of sins forgiven cried aloud, in the fulness of her joy, *Mille molo lath, mo Slanihore!* that is, "A thousand praises to Thee, my Saviour!" While a third, who had been a member of different Romish orders, and considered almost a saint, much to the surprise of priest and people, renounced them all. The priest sent her word, that if she feared to perish in her own religion, he would stand in her place at the last day; but she would not be thus drawn from her confidence.

On December the 25th, Graham writes from Enniskillen: "The fire of the Lord attends us wherever we go. It is astonishing what sinners have been convinced and converted during the last week. I never saw the prejudices of Enniskillen so conquered in the street before; the most hardened held down their heads, and went away confounded. We did not leave the street until we left with triumph. I think this was one of the best days that Enniskillen has seen. In the street we published for preaching in the house, where the power of the Lord fell on the people, and many were enabled to proclaim the pardoning love of Jesus Christ. All glory be to His eternal name, He is riding in triumph through all this land. You would imagine that error and vice would soon take their flight out of the country. Mr. Stuart mounted his horse to-day, took the street with us, and did valiantly. Blessed be the Lord, His servants are not ashamed to confess Him in the open streets. Messrs. Stuart and Kerr are going on courageously, and the Lord is owning their labours among the people."

Next day, at Mr. G. M'Donald's, near the town no house could contain the people, so the service was held in the open air. About one hundred of those present were Romanists. At Derrygonnelly, the crowd was so great that the Catholics present wished them to go into the chapel, but as the priest was not a consenting party, the missionaries declined to do so.

On the last day of the year, about thirty were converted, and several obtained the blessing of purity of heart. Amongst the latter were a number of young persons, whose faces seemed to shine with celestial radiance.

While thus the Lord was greatly acknowledging the general mission in the north, the brethren in the south and west did not labour in vain. Messrs. Kane and Webb, having left Cork, went to Bandon, and preached on the bridge to a large audience, who heard with attention and profit. Thence they proceeded to Kinsale, where, while they proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to hundreds, a poor Romanist held firm the chair on which they stood, and listened with tears to the joyful news. From Kinsale, they returned to Bandon, and at the service here about one thousand persons were present, amongst whom was a woman who had two brothers that were priests, and notwithstanding earnest remonstrance, declared she must hear the truth. In the evening the chapel was filled. Next day the missionaries went to Rushfield, and discoursed in the preaching-house to numerous and serious congregations. On the following evening many Romanists attended and were much affected. At Ballyneen, there was a large and attentive congregation of Catholics, who joined heartily in the service, and at prayer, knelt down in the street. At Mr. John Dawson's,* Lisnagat, the house of meeting was full, and some Romanists, who could not get in continued on their knees outside, all the time of service. At Creagh Beg, the place was filled with Protestants and Catholics, who were deeply moved under the sound of the truth. At Cape Clear island, where there was not a single Protestant, the evangelists preached, and reasoned with the people, who admitted that no wicked man, though a Catholic, could enter heaven. At Ardraly, the servants of God had a cheering time, their hearers eagerly receiving the word preached. At Dunmanway, there were upwards of one thousand persons present, including a Protestant clergyman, all of whom listened with great attention. On the return of the missionaries to Cork they had about sixteen hundred hearers ; and the Lord owned His word.

Messrs. M'Quigg and Bell preached throughout Leinster and Munster, and wherever they went were well received, except by the priests. Having been invited by a gentleman at Urlingford, to preach in the town, they took their position in the street at the close of mass, and as they sang a hymn a vast crowd collected.

* Son of Richard Dawson, Mossgrove, *vide* i., p. 368.

During prayer the priest rushed like a maniac through the audience, and swore there would be no preaching there; but was soon brought to a stand by a magistrate present. The service therefore went on, and the people, about fifteen hundred of whom were Romanists, listened with deep concern, some with tears. Thus the missionaries preached the Gospel to thousands, who had never heard it before, and it proved the power of God to the salvation of hundreds. An Episcopal minister in Roscrea was so deeply impressed with the success of the mission that he declared "There never was so useful a scheme adopted for the good of Ireland;" but at the same time feared the evangelists could not "stand it any time." At Mountrath, an old priest strove to take the people away; but was at length compelled to give up the attempt in despair. In Dublin, Mr. Bell preached on Oxmantown Green and Mr. M'Quigg at St. John's well, to large congregations, and saw fruit to their labours. At Mountmellick, they discoursed under the window of a house in which was a gentleman, who had been a bitter enemy to the Society. He was suffering from a stroke of paralysis; and the word was applied with power to his conscience. He wept aloud, and at the close of the service sent for the preacher, Mr. M'Quigg, who says he never saw a man in deeper distress for salvation. At a fair in Queen's county, a vast multitude listened until a ballad singer set up a counter attraction. A gentleman present, however, took the law into his own hands, by horsewhipping the enemy of the truth, so that he sang no more that day. These missionaries say they saw hundreds kneeling down and weeping in the streets, large numbers of whom were subsequently converted; and they had the satisfaction of hearing many masters rejoicing over the moral improvement in their servants.

On the Carlow circuit, Messrs. Matthew Stewart and Jackson had the joy of seeing the work of God prospering; many souls were converted, and a number of openings obtained for the preaching of the Gospel. In the town the congregations were large, but in the country districts there was more spiritual success.*

On the Wicklow circuit also, where Messrs. Lanktree and John Wilson were stationed, although a severe dearth prevailed, which

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1804, p. 201.

caused much and general distress, the good cause prospered blessedly. Efficient assistance was sometimes rendered by the Rev. T. Kelly. On one occasion he visited Arklow with Mr. Lanktree, and on arriving they sent to request the use of a corn-kiln for a service, but were refused. Mr. Kelly then proposed to make it a subject of prayer, after which they applied personally to the owner, who at once consented; and Mr. Kelly preached there with much freedom and power.*

Meanwhile Lorenzo Dow, having recovered from a serious attack of small-pox, resumed his labours, regardless of the resolution of the Conference; but found the Methodist chapels in general closed against him. However some of the preachers, including Mr. Lanktree, being satisfied that the Divine blessing rested on his labours, took him by the hand. He therefore visited the principal appointments on the Wicklow circuit, and everywhere was owned of God in the salvation of sinners. At Waterford, Mr. Zechariah Worrell gave him the right hand of fellowship, and afforded him opportunities of working for Christ, which proved a means of good. At Pilltown, Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Tallow, and Kinsale, the chapels were opened to him; large congregations attended, and souls were saved.

About two years previous to this time, Charles and James M'Cord of Cloonturk, in the county of Longford, who had been converted in connection with Methodism, settled in the neighbourhood of Killashee, where they invited the preachers to their house; and the Society was placed under the care of Charles. The good work having prospered greatly, they resolved to erect a chapel; and, having obtained the consent of Conference, subscriptions were given by many of the local gentlemen; the Ballymahon yeomanry rendered valuable aid, and not a few of the poor gave of their little all to help forward the undertaking. So it was soon completed, and proved a means of abundant spiritual blessing, as the Gospel preached within its walls was the power of God unto the salvation of many.†

Thus during this year, with regard to Ireland, was blessedly and gloriously fulfilled the Divine assurance, "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

* Lanktree's Narrative, p. 83. † *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1808, p. 161-2.

CHAPTER XIV.

1801.

At this period the country was thrown into great distress, by the exhaustion attendant on long political agitation, and the failure of the crops, especially the potatoes. Famine followed rebellion, and that was succeeded and accompanied by fever. An inhabitant of Bandon writes, that when the dearth of provisions was at its height, potatoes were sold at two shillings and fourpence per stone and everything else in proportion, and thousands of the poor died of starvation ; while Mr. Ferguson, then in the extreme north, knew a pious man who travelled a whole day in search of food, with a guinea in his pocket, and was unable to procure any.

The Methodists exerted themselves with laudable zeal in visiting the sick and needy, and in raising subscriptions to supply their wants. At Maryborough, Bartholomew Greaves, a young man full of faith and love, was conspicuous in this benevolent enterprise, seeking out the starving and dying, and depriving himself of the necessaries of life in order to mitigate their woes ; his career, however, soon closed, being no doubt cut short by his self-sacrificing devotion.*

Sermons were preached in the old barrack, Coleraine, on behalf of the suffering poor, which made such an impression in the mind of a gentleman present, that he suggested the propriety of at once making personal application to the inhabitants of the town for assistance. This was done on the following day, and a sum of about £250 obtained. An order was sent without delay to Sligo where the scarcity was not so severely felt, and sixty or seventy tons of oatmeal purchased which afforded important and seasonable relief. Mr. Charles Galt also, who had purchased a large quantity of grain for malting, at once decided on having no

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1828, p. 158.

more that season, and had the barley ground and supplied to the poor on moderate terms.

The privations endured were sanctified in leading to a deepening and extension of the work of God on this circuit. A large number of respectable young men attended the services, and many of them were led to decide for God. Among these was John M'Kenny, then a lad of twelve years of age, who continued to walk steadily in the way of holiness until called into the work of the ministry. He was one of the brethren chosen to accompany Dr. Coke to the East; had the honour of being the first Wesleyan missionary in southern Africa, and afterwards laboured with success in Ceylon and Australia. Another converted at this time was Thomas Waugh, whose mother was an eminently devoted and consistent Christian. He was sent for a while to the Diocesan Free Grammar School, now Foyle College, Londonderry, which has been long famed for the distinguished men who received their early education within its walls. While here Waugh gave proof of the mental readiness and manly independence which so notably distinguished his after life. He also attracted the attention of Mr. Alexander Knox, whose "Thirty Years' Correspondence" with Bishop Jebb shows how great an interest he took in the welfare of the Episcopal Church, and how deeply concerned he was that she should secure a succession of pious and efficient ministers. Into that ministry he hoped to introduce his protégé. But He who knows what best for each will prove, had laid out other plans for this youth, and ultimately led him into the Methodist ministry where his services were greatly owned of God.

There was also a gracious work among the military quartered in Coleraine. One of those brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, Isaac Phenix, a native of Armagh, was subsequently called into the itinerancy in England, where he laboured for forty-seven years, and was well known and highly esteemed. Sergeant Ross West,* and his wife were also savingly converted, joined the Society, and afterwards settled in Glasgow, where they were steady and useful members of the Church, both having charge of classes. The Rev. John M'Lean, who for forty-one years travelled in connection with the British Conference, was converted as Sergeant West knelt

* Uncle of the Revs. Thomas and Daniel West.

at his side ; and received from him religious counsel and instruction that contributed much to his subsequent power and usefulness. He writes : " Balmanno street, or, as it used to be called, Deanside Brae, was then a consecrated street. A company of holy and intelligent Wesleyan families had clustered together, who never allowed any person, with whom they had influence, to rest until they had submitted to the righteousness of God ; and whose zeal was so tempered with knowledge, that they never pressed anyone to a premature profession, or presumed to supersede the Holy Spirit in His office of Comforter. For many years these Scottish Wesleyans—many of them the fruits of Irish Methodism—were, next to the Saviour, the comfort and strength of my heart, both as a young Wesleyan, and subsequently as one of their ministers. There was Ross West, a singularly clear and able theologian, with his seraphic wife, whose humility, sanctity, intelligent, loving and unwearied zeal, and faithful labours in the Church, would have done honour to the apostolic age. Mr. Kelly, wise, grave, devout ; and his wife, strong-minded, active, clear-headed, and of weighty and affectionate discourse. Josiah Shields, and his loving Baptist wife. There was good John Duff, and gentle Thomas Wheelan, men who were mighty in prayer, and full of the Holy Ghost."*

But to return to Ireland. The good work extended from Coleraine to the neighbouring Societies, especially that at Billy, which had been formed several years previously, and was then blessed with two pious and zealous leaders, David M'Curdy and Neal Horan, who with their wives exerted a very powerful influence for good. Among those brought to the knowledge of God, was Matthew M'Iroy, a man whose enmity against Methodism had been so great that during the famine, when it was extremely difficult for those who had money to procure food, he compelled his wife to return some oatmeal, which she had got from M'Curdy, as he would not eat any Methodist bread. But subsequently he was induced to attend the services of the people he had regarded with such dislike ; and, being deeply awakened, when he could no longer conceal the anguish of his soul, retired to a field, where he wrestled with God until He spoke peace to his soul. He was then received into the Society, after some time appointed a

* Life of the Rev. Daniel West, pp. 5-6.

leader, and to the close of life maintained a character distinguished for uniform uprightness and integrity.

The increase of the Society in Coleraine led at length to the erection of a chapel. Mr. Averell, on visiting the town, was impressed with the miserable accommodation for public services, took the opportunity of urging on a few of the leading friends the necessity of building a house, and even mentioned the place on which he thought it should stand. When no one offered to make a beginning, he said: "Brother Galt, I call on you, in the Lord's name, to build a chapel for the Society in this town," and at the same time handed him a sum of money as a subscription. Mr. Galt did not make up his mind just then to proceed with the work, more especially as he knew there was a dispute as to the title of the proposed site. However, he waited on one of those who claimed the property, and asked if he would give the ground for a Methodist chapel. "You are most fortunate," said the gentleman; "last night's post brought me the news that the law-suit had been decided in my favour, and I feel pleasure in being able to accommodate you." This settled the question.

During the erection of the building, an occurrence took place which exerted a painful and pernicious influence on the congregation. Under specially attractive circumstances, theatricals were commenced in the town, which were eventually put down; but not before they had done much harm, having drawn away many of the young persons who had been accustomed to attend the Methodist services, and also having led to the giving up of a liberal monthly collection for the poor.

Bereavement was added to other trials through which, during this year, the Coleraine Society was called to pass, in the death of the junior preacher, William Ap. Richard. He was a young man of remarkable promise, possessing deep piety combined with a strength of mind and soundness of judgment beyond his years. Having been given a bed in which a lad, ill with fever, had lain, he caught the infection, and after much suffering, finished his course, happy in God.

The greater part of January was spent by Lorenzo Dow in Dublin, where, although discouraged by the Society, he found opportunities for Christian work in private houses. Then he travelled through King's county, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Fermanagh,

and Tyrone, in most of which he received but a cool reception. However, at Tullamore, he obtained the use of the preaching-house, which was filled, and also addressed out of doors a congregation of about fifteen hundred persons. At Sligo, he met Mr. Averell, who preached and administered the Lord's supper there; and in the evening Lorenzo addressed about a thousand people in the court-house. In the neighbourhood of Dungannon, he obtained the pulpit of the Seceding meeting-house, where he addressed about seven hundred people. On returning to Dublin, subscriptions having been raised to pay his passage home, he embarked for America, on April 2nd, thus ending his first visit to this country.

Mr. Field had charge of an hospital in Bandon; and as fever raged in the town, there were numerous patients. Lest the infection should spread, he did not suffer wife, child, or even the orderly to enter the fever ward; but attended the sick night and day himself, bathed their feet, made their beds, and did the whole duty of the ward, yet was not smitten with the disease, nor did one of his patients die.* Surely "the prayer of faith shall save the sick."

On the Wexford circuit, in order to extend the good work, a meeting was called of the preachers, leaders, and other principal friends; and after earnest prayer, arrangements were made for special services in the most convenient places. These were much owned of the Lord, especially one in what had been the Catholic chapel, Ballycanew. The Rev. Andrew Mosse, rector of Kilnamanagh, was present, and deeply impressed under the word preached. He remained for the after service, during which he testified that he had there and then obtained peace and joy, through believing; and in his subsequent saintly and useful life, gave unmistakable evidence of the depth and fervour of his piety. At Hacketstown, the members of two or three classes, who had separated from their brethren, and formed a society of their own, in order to partake of the Lord's supper, because they could not obtain it from their own preachers, quietly returned to the parent Society.

The brethren at Skibbereen sustained a severe loss in the

* A Devout Soldier, p. 179.

death of their junior preacher, Thomas Keys, a young man of simple and unaffected piety, who, after a painful illness in the house of Mr. Evans, Ardaly, passed peacefully to that region, where the "inhabitant shall not say, I am sick."

Very few details have been published with regard to the work of the missionaries in the north, during the first quarter of this year, and nothing of those in the south and west. In January, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley were in Fermanagh, where a man named Crawford, who had been one of the vilest characters in the county, heard them preach, was converted, and became as zealous for God as he had been for Satan. At Lowtherstown, some officers threatened to duck the missionaries, or bayonet them, if they did not desist; but they were neither ducked nor bayoneted. At Makenny, in Mr. Somerville's, about fifteen were converted one night, and amongst them two soldiers, who had followed the servants of God from town. Proceeding northward, at Coleraine, they were owned in a most gracious manner, in the building up of the Society. Here, also, they were invited to breakfast at a Mr. Maguire's, where were many to meet them, including Mrs. Ould,* a most respectable lady, who had been a special favourite of the Duchess of Rutland, when her husband was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Mrs. Ould had been much impressed during the visit of the missionaries in the previous year, but had not consented to take up the cross involved in identifying herself with the Society. But now, the Spirit of God descended so powerfully, that she, with several others, was led to a present and complete consecration to the Lord's service. Her sister, Mrs. Shiel, was also then led to decide for God.

Returning south, at the fair of Roslea, where were numerous zealous and powerful servants of the devil, the missionaries "stormed his kingdom," many trembled in the open street, and not a few were turned to the Lord. At Wattsbridge, there were present at the service about one thousand persons, large numbers of whom were brought under deep conviction of sin, and some obtained peace in believing. Ouseley, about this time, met

* Her son, the Rev. Fielding Ould, was an eminent minister in the Established Church.

with a serious loss, for his horse died. There was, however, a Mr. Little, of Redhill, who had been converted through the labours of the missionaries, and whose house had, in consequence, become the home of the preachers; he made up the loss by a generous present of another and excellent steed.

From Redhill, the evangelists went to Ballyhaise, where they met many poor "sheep without a shepherd," who felt these men had more love for them, than all the clergy in the country. At Cavan, the Romanists showed great concern, even alarm, when told that "neither salt, nor water, nor oil, nor beads, would ever save them." One man cried out, that it cost him half a guinea for wine and spirits at the previous confession. At Killashandra, "the crowd was immense, and the word bore down all before it." Mr. Rennick met the missionaries at Carrigallen, where Ouseley preached with telling effect. That evening, at Sunnaghconner, Graham preached, and "eight or ten were set at liberty." Next day, the itinerants came to Arvagh; Ouseley discoursed to a great crowd in the market; and in the evening at Mr. Johnston's. As no house could hold the people, Graham took the field, and ten were enabled to rejoice in the Lord their Saviour. Thence, Mr. Harpur's of Drumlarney was visited, where, says Graham, "The heavens were opened, and the skies poured down blessings upon all: about twenty found peace."

We may here mention a circumstance which is worthy of record. Mr. Harpur and the head of another respectable family in the neighbourhood, some time previous to this, had a conversation about receiving the preachers. The neighbour said he had resolved not to invite them to his house, "for," said he, "I see few but plain people joining them, and, having a large family of daughters, my lodging the preachers might prevent them from being respectably married." "Well," said Mr. Harpur, "I have also a large family, but I'll trust God, and take His servants in." He did so, and in the course of a few years, all the members of his family were well settled in life, while the children of his friend were not only sadly disappointed in this respect, but passed through very trying and adverse circumstances. Truly, the Lord "blesseth the habitation of the just."

But to return to the missionaries. On Sunday, May 24th, at Drumlarney, they preached to not less than a thousand persons,

all of whom appeared much affected, and many were converted. In the evening at Drumbullion, the audience was even larger, and similar manifestations of saving power were numerous. The quarterly meeting here soon afterwards had to be held in the open air, for the chapel could not contain one-fourth of the congregation; and the service was continued until a late hour in the night, so many were aroused to a sense of their spiritual condition. On the 25th, the missionaries returned to Carrigallen, and preached to a mixed multitude, some of whom had never heard a gospel sermon previously. "Such a day," says Graham, "was never seen there before. It was a time both of weeping and rejoicing." In the evening in a field at Mrs. Love's, Corduff, "the heavenly fire spread all around, many were set at liberty, and the service continued until late at night." Thence the missionaries repaired to Cloone, called by Graham "Satan's seat," where numbers resided whom the enemy of souls employed at fairs and markets in bloody work. They thought to begin their diabolic practices this day also, but the Lord restrained them, and made their wrath to praise Him. At Mohill, the word was blessed to many; the Romanists cried out, they never heard such things before; and in the evening several were enabled to rejoice in a sin pardoning God.

Next the missionaries arrived at Longford, where they preached in the street, and most of the Methodists in the town stood around them. The priests were enraged and warned their people not to listen, but numbers did and heard to purpose. Of the following Sabbath, Graham writes, "I have seen good days in Longford, but I never saw a better day than this." At Killashee, the minister of the Established Church having publicly denied the direct witness of the Spirit, Graham preached in reply from 1 Cor. ii. 12. At Keenagh, the cries of the people were alarming, but the Lord was present to heal. Thirteen persons joined the Society. At Barry, a village proverbial for blasphemy, God gave His blessing with the word, and ten were added to the Society. At Ballymahon, which lay "in the region and shadow of death," a tumult was raised by means of a mad woman, who made a loud noise, uttering horrible blasphemies. The mob also threw stones, but the servants of God bravely stood their ground. At Goshen, an old seat of Methodism, they were kindly entertained by Mr.

M'Cutcheon, and spent a very happy Sabbath. A rich shower of blessing descended on the congregations, and some were "added to the Lord and to His Church by His will." At Lisduff, there was a glorious awakening, Catholics and Protestants being alarmed and crying aloud for mercy, and the priests endeavouring in vain to keep their people from the services. At Granard, the missionaries preached in the market, and hundreds of Romanists followed them, and listened with deep interest, so that the evangelists had reason to believe "their labour was not in vain in the Lord."

The county of Cavan was next visited. Of the Killashandra circuit, Graham writes, "This country is all on fire; and the work of the Lord goes on rapidly. The meeting to-night at Drum-larney, lasted until eleven o'clock. Vast numbers were saved from guilt, and others sought and obtained sanctifying grace. Several Roman Catholics have been converted since we left, and have left mass altogether." Two received the truth at this meeting. Next day the missionaries preached in the open air, and such was the deep distress of many, that the meeting had to be continued until midnight in an adjoining barn. About forty obtained peace in believing, including four Romanists. At Ballyconnell, many Catholics were present, and there was a great ingathering. At Swanlinbar, the success was even greater, rich and poor, Catholics and Protestants were present, and alike appeared much affected. At some of the meetings, several fell into swoons, lay motionless for a time, and then on regaining consciousness appeared unspeakably happy. Here the priest extinguished candles, and rang bells to excommunicate those who heard the Black-caps; but notwithstanding all this the poor people continued to attend, and said, "The preachers told the honest truth."

At this period, the Rev. J. Jebb, who was curate of Swanlinbar, wrote to his correspondent Mr. Knox, thus: "On the treatment of the Methodists, you gave me some useful advice in Dublin. They form so considerable a portion of my flock, that I wish to direct much of my attention to them. I have some pleasure in imagining that most of them are inclined to attend me, and have rather a favourable opinion of me. One preacher, indeed, I have been well informed, endeavoured to infuse suspicion of me. Of this you may be certain, I shall take no notice. Others of their

preachers, I have been informed, recommend attention to what I preach, etc. I wish indeed that their meetings did not interfere with the hours of Divine service, which they sometimes do. On the means of affecting a change in their time of meeting, and on any other particulars respecting them, a few hints from you would be extremely serviceable to me. You well know the principles and feelings of the sect, and could no doubt point out the gentlest and most effectual way of dealing with them.”*

But to return to the missionaries. Passing from Cavan to Fermanagh, they came to Lisbellaw, where the cry of the Catholics for mercy was most affecting. With a sad wail they exclaimed, “Have we believed the doctrines of devils, and renounced the Gospel of God for the commandments of men?” At the love-feast held in a large garden at Fivemiletown, there was a great company whom no house could hold. “The Spirit of the Lord descended in an abundant manner; the shout of a King was heard, and the voice of new born souls was sweet. It was a day of the Son of man.”

Soon after this a conversion took place, which became “the talk of the country side.” Terry M’Gowan was a cock-fighter, whose mind was overwhelmed, as he often expressed it, in the double darkness of sin and Popery. One fair day, making for the cockpit, he entered Maguiresbridge, with a game-cock under his swallow-tail coat. On turning a corner, he saw two men before him on horseback, who were making the street resound with the accents of his mother tongue. He stood and listened. They spoke of the great and terrible day, when sin shall be all uncovered, and the righteous shall shine like the sun for ever; and then called earnestly on every sinner there to lose no time, but surrender at once to the Lord Jesus, before it was too late. Terry thought the day of judgment was fast approaching, and forgetting his charge, trembled under a sense of guilt and danger. Up went the two hands in prayer, and the game-cock was gone. Terry wept and cried aloud for mercy; and continuing for some time under conviction, groping in the darkness of sin and superstition in which he had so long lived, at length was enabled to rejoice in the unclouded sunshine of the Divine favour.

* *Thirty Years’ Correspondence*, pp. 34-5.

No sooner did he experience this happy change than he became exceedingly anxious that others should realize it, and in his broken English exhorted them to flee from the wrath to come. In his great desire for the salvation of his kindred, he made a journey of between thirty and forty miles to Dartry, to try and convince them of the errors of Popery; but to his great disappointment, instead of being persuaded by his arguments, they sent at once for the priest, that he might show Terry his sin in leaving the true Church. When his reverence arrived, he inquired what was the matter. "Never better in my life," said Terry. "Nonsense," replied the priest; and suspecting how matters really stood, added, "Did you hear the Black-caps?" "I did, thank God." "So I thought. Those fellows would turn the world mad. Well, now, just mind your own business, and go to your duty next Sunday." "I will," said Terry, "if your reverence will do one thing for me." "What is that?" inquired the priest. "It is to come with me to Maguiresbridge, and get the Lord to undo what He did for me there." "What did He do for you?" "He said to me, Terry M'Gowan, your sins, which are many, are all forgiven you!" This was more than the priest could stand. It was as if his business had been taken out of his hands, and claimed for a higher tribunal. "I give you up as a lost case," he said, and took his leave.

Thus left to his new found way, Terry went on, led of the Lord, from strength to strength. After a while, he began to go about holding prayer-meetings; and was made a blessing to many. When his end drew nigh, the neighbours, as is usual in all such cases, made great efforts to get the priest admitted to his dying bed, to receive him back to the Church of his fathers; but no, Terry realized the truth too deeply for that. The Protestant clergyman came to give him the Lord's supper, but so fearful was he lest the people should think he had any notion that the elements could be changed by the word of man, or that he placed any confidence in old forms, he entreated the minister, instead of reading prayers out of a book, to pray extempore. After the clergyman had done so twice, Terry said that he must pray himself for "a fuller manifestation of the countenance of God." He did pray, and it seemed as if the Lord descended, and filled the place with His glory. Ever afterwards the clergyman

thanked God for that day. Thus in a spirit of firm confidence and joyful hope this humble convert from Romanism passed to the Church triumphant.

Tributes like the above to the success of the mission at this period might be multiplied, but suffice it to add only the following strong and general testimony of Mr. Thomas Davis, the superintendent of the Clones circuit. He had feared, on returning from the Conference, that the year would not be like the preceding one; but it had proved better and better. The power which had accompanied the word had often brought a refreshing view of Peter preaching on the day of Pentecost. The first Sunday after Conference, as Mr. Davis proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, numbers were melted down and sought mercy with prayers and tears; and the meeting lasted from four in the afternoon till eleven at night. In going round his circuit, he had more than once received from twenty to fifty new members at one service. The love-feasts had frequently to be held in the fields, and in the midst of storms of wind and rain. During the year no less than seven hundred and forty-six members had been added to the Society. With reference to the missionaries, he says:—"The mighty power of God accompanied their words with such demonstrative evidence as I never knew or indeed very rarely heard of. I have been present in fairs and markets, while these two blessed men of God, with burning zeal and apostolic ardour, pointed hundreds and thousands to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. And I have seen the immediate fruit of their labour, the aged and the young falling prostrate in the most public places of concourse, cut to the heart, and refusing to be comforted until they knew Jesus and the power of His resurrection. I have known scores of these poor penitents stand up and witness a good confession; and, blessed be God, hundreds of men now stand and adorn the Gospel of Christ Jesus. These two men have been the most indefatigable in their labours of love to perishing sinners of any that I have yet known; from four to six hours they would preach, exhort, and pray, and next day perhaps ride a journey, and encounter the same labour of love. Thus—

"They scorned their feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of its swift decline."*

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1802, pp. 40-42.

Once more these servants of God with glad hearts turned their faces towards the metropolis, to meet their brethren, and rehearse to them what great things the Lord had done.

The Conference met on July the 3rd, Dr. Coke being president, and Mr. Averell, secretary; and it proved a time of much rejoicing, owing mainly to the large increase reported in the membership, amounting to close upon five thousand. Seven candidates were received on trial, including Thomas Loughheed of Riverstown, James Sterling of Inishowen, George M'Elwain of Emyvale, and John Nesbitt of Donaghmore. Three deaths had occurred in the ministerial ranks during the preceding year, in addition to those of William Ap. Richard and Thomas Keys already mentioned; Thomas Hewett, "a man of sincere piety and integrity," who had ever proved faithful to the doctrine and discipline of Methodism; John Hurley, who gave promise of great usefulness, but, alas! fell a martyr to his zeal in his Redeemer's cause; and William Gamble, who only travelled a few months, having been sent to the Athlone circuit as a supply for Mr. Hurley.

The judgment of the Conference with regard to the general mission is clear and strong. In respect to that in the north, conducted by Messrs. Graham and Ouseley, it is stated, that the success had been "very considerable among the Roman Catholics;" its usefulness in stirring up Protestants almost unbounded; and in connection with the labours of the regular preachers, it had been the means "of the conversion of vast numbers." In regard to the western mission, of which Messrs. M'Quigg and Bell had charge, it is said, many hundreds, and frequently thousands of Roman Catholics had attended the preaching of the missionaries, and "if weeping, trembling, and falling down in the streets" be evidence of religious awakening, "great good had been done in this quarter." In reference to the south, where Messrs. Kane and Webb laboured, it is recorded, "very large congregations of Roman Catholics" had attended the open-air services, many of whom followed the missionaries to the preaching-houses, and some were much affected. While "in the city of Limerick and neighbouring country, multitudes of Roman Catholics" listened to the word preached with attention, "many appeared to be truly awakened, and there was every appearance of a good work."

However the labours of the missionaries had been so severe

and trying that Messrs. M'Quigg and Bell were compelled to return to the ordinary work of the itinerancy, and Mr. Webb to his secular employment, thus leaving but three to continue this hallowed enterprise, Messrs. Graham, Ouseley, and Kane.

Amongst the many present at one of the public services conducted by Dr. Coke, was a young curate from Kilkenny, named Peter Roe, who had been awakened to a sense of his sinfulness by the reading of Wilberforce's "Practical View of Christianity," and was gradually emerging from spiritual darkness into the light of the glorious Gospel. Although disappointed in the preacher, with regard to whom his expectations had been raised too high, he thought the sermon a good one; he also became acquainted with one or two of the ministers and several of the leading Methodist laymen, including Messrs. Keene and Dugdale, and Dr. D'Olier, in association with whom he was not only impressed with "the rising spirit of religion in Dublin," but encouraged and stimulated in his spiritual life, and thus prepared for a ministerial career which proved one of remarkable piety, zeal, and success.

Mr. Averell was appointed representative to the British Conference; and, accompanied by Dr. Coke and Mr. John Kerr, proceeded at once to Leeds, where the ministers met. Up to this period the preachers in England had most generously paid all deficiencies in the income of Ireland; but now it was resolved that, not only the claims for this year, amounting to nearly £650, should not be paid, but that no further pecuniary assistance should be given to the Irish Connexion. The reason for this was not any dissatisfaction with the preachers or people on this side of the channel, but the financial embarrassment in which the English brethren were themselves placed. In their Address to the Irish Conference it is said, "We should have been glad to have assisted you in your temporal wants, had we been able; but it was utterly out of our power. Our difficulties have been such, that the preachers, some of whom literally wanted bread in the course of last year, subscribed £200 towards supplying deficiencies, relieving distressed preachers, etc. They also voluntarily gave credit for deficiencies to the amount of about £1,200 till the next Conference. Some also gave up the salaries of their wives, which will save the Contingent Fund nearly £100 a year, and notwithstanding all this, we are above £2,000 in debt." It is only right to add that

the British Conference, as an expression of fraternal affection, cancelled all debts due by the Irish brethren for books, made them a present of whatever remained on their hands unsold, and gave them permission to reprint and publish any work of the London Book room.

Bearing in mind that mission work in Ireland was one of the objects contemplated in the institution of "the General Fund;" that for nearly forty years this country had been annually assisted by it, and that the Methodist Societies were formed on the basis of the strong helping the weak, it appears exceedingly questionable how far this act of the British Conference can be justified. That Ireland should bear a share of the severe financial pressure of the times, by a reduction in its grant proportionate to the deficiency in the income is freely admitted; but that it should thus have been deprived of all pecuniary help seems to us far from equitable. Moreover this repudiation of all financial responsibility was considered by the Irish brethren to have taken place at a most unfavourable time. The country laboured under the desolating effects of the rebellion of 1798, the failure of the harvest in 1799, and the famine which followed, when many perished for lack of bread. It is true, however, there was in the Connexion great spiritual and numerical prosperity; but the large majority of those added to the Society were in exceedingly humble circumstances, and thus unable to render assistance in such a crisis.

Most formidable as were the difficulties to be contended with, the preachers in Ireland determined to face them bravely, and Dr. Coke, with characteristic zeal and affection, hastened to their aid. He at once summoned the members of the Dublin district to meet and consult as to the best means of obtaining relief from the financial embarrassment in which they were involved. At this meeting it was agreed that an effort should be made to raise a special subscription through the kingdom, at the rate of one shilling for each member, and with the amount, after paying the debt contracted, to establish a Book room. To give effect to this proposal, and have it generally adopted, a statement of the facts, with an affectionate appeal, was prepared, and Dr. Coke and Mr. Averell were requested to meet the preachers of each of the other districts at their respective places of assembly,

and lay the matter before them. The result was most satisfactory and encouraging; upwards of £1,300 was raised, which proved a very seasonable relief, and afforded some help to the establishment of the Book room.

Meanwhile the preachers were not diverted from their great work of leading sinners to the Saviour. Immediately after the close of the Irish Conference, the missionaries resumed their earnest and self-denying labours. At Oldcastle, Mr. Ouseley, assisted by Messrs. Stuart and Murphy, preached in the street, where there were many Romanists; and the Lord made it a great blessing to the people. "There was a noise and a shaking, together with cries and tears in the congregation." Next day, as they passed through Ballyjamesduff, the missionary addressed the market people, who appeared like the dry ground thirsting for the refreshing rain; the poor Catholics wept, some of them wringing their hands, and crying aloud for mercy. At Cavan, a school-master came to Mr. Graham to obtain advice as to what he should do, his priest having ordered him to stand in the congregation for hearing the missionaries; and when asked if he would do what had thus been laid upon him, he replied, "I never will, for I have never known the priest to do any good, but I see the country round blessed by your coming here." At Monaghan, Mr. Ouseley preached in the fair, and had an attentive hearing, the truth bearing down all before it. "Glory to God," write the missionaries, "our Catholic converts are going on steadily, and we trust will prove a leaven in their families and among their neighbours."*

In the numerous cases of conversion from Popery, which took place at this period, earnest efforts were made by the Church of Rome to bring back the converts, and, when possible, cruel persecution was resorted to. Suffice it to narrate one instance. Mr. Bell, who had been on the general mission, but at the last Conference was stationed in Downpatrick, knowing the good resulting from street preaching, continued to adopt it on his circuit. One day while thus engaged, a Roman Catholic, named James Magorian, who was also a member of the order of the Holy Scapular, was attracted to the spot and deeply impressed with

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1802, pp. 426-27.

the word preached, which eventually led to his conversion to God, renouncing all connection with Popery, and becoming a member of the Methodist Society. In order, however, to reclaim him, he was in turn caressed, cajoled, and menaced by agents of the Romish Church. The first who attempted to effect his restoration was a friar, at whose instance the convert was requested to go to the house of a Catholic gentleman, who, it was said, wished to see him. On repairing thither, he was ushered into the oratory or domestic chapel, which was filled with the gorgeous and impressive paraphernalia of Popery, and left there alone for some time, no doubt in order to affect his mind by the objects with which he was surrounded. At one end of the room there was a large representation of the Crucifixion, to which either through inadvertence or to show his abhorrence of such pictures, he turned his back. When the friar entered, he at once spoke strongly of the irreverence thus displayed; Magorian meekly replied, "The Saviour whom I worship is always before me." The emissary of Rome, perceiving that he was not likely to gain his point by an appeal to the senses, varied his mode of attack, and endeavoured to prove that Protestantism was false, but was met in each instance by an appeal to the Word of God. Finding his wayward son a more sturdy polemic than he had expected, he again changed his tone, and in the most tender and affectionate manner, told him how much he loved him, how deeply he was concerned for his salvation, and implored him to turn from the awful doom to which he was hastening. When the friar saw that he prevailed nothing, he lovingly embraced and wept over the young convert, exclaiming in the most impassioned manner, "My son! my son!" This burst of grief greatly affected Magorian, in whom were aroused all the kindly and sympathetic feelings of his generous nature, so that for a few moments he wavered. But quickly coming to himself again, he remembered the painful experience through which he had passed in his search after truth, and his firmness returned. The friar saw that the snare was broken, and therefore reluctantly gave up the task which he found himself unable to accomplish. A similar attempt was subsequently made by one of the parish priests, which proved equally unsuccessful.

It was now reported that Magorian, by associating with

heretics and reading the Scriptures, had gone mad, and that if proper measures were not promptly adopted, he would become a confirmed lunatic. His friends, therefore, under pretence that he might do himself grievous bodily harm, were enjoined to watch him with the utmost vigilance; to hide from him all articles that could do him injury; and to divert his attention from religion, by endeavouring to get him to join in worldly sports: but all proved in vain. It was then thought best to procure an interview between him and the Catholic Bishop of the diocese, who by interposing his authority might prevent the plague from spreading, and restore the rebel to his former allegiance. His lordship lost no time in complying with the request, and endeavoured with great urbanity to convince the wanderer of his duty to submit to the Church; but Magorian said he could not be persuaded to renounce that which his enlightened judgment assured him was the truth of God, at the bidding of any man, however learned or dignified he might be. At this the Bishop assumed a lofty air, and threatened him with his malediction if he did not submit. As the convert knew that "the curse causeless shall not come," he regarded the threats of the Right Rev. Father as utterly harmless, and remained unmoved while they were uttered.

Nothing now remained but formally to cut off the erring one from the Church, and thus abandon him to the contempt and fury of his former co-religionists. His nearest relatives thenceforth regarded him as an outcast, whose words would eat as doth a canker; and therefore treated him in the most harsh and unnatural manner, while from his neighbours he suffered cruel and outrageous persecution. Thus on one occasion, a party of men, including one about to take orders as a priest, overtook him on the road, and drew him into a controversy on the teaching of the Church of Rome. They soon found they were not able to answer his arguments, and proceeded first to gibe him for having changed his faith, and then to use violence, falling on him with one accord, so that after having suffered much abuse he narrowly escaped with life. The Christian spirit, however, which he manifested under these trying circumstances, made such an impression on the mind of the candidate for the priesthood, that he concluded there must be something in Protestantism that he knew not of, and

resolved to inquire into its nature. The result was, he abandoned his intention as to holy orders, and gave such marked evidence of a change in religious views, that his friends hurried him off to America, where he formally identified himself with the Protestant Church.

One other instance of persecution may be noted. Two relatives of Magorian, having tried every means in their power to induce him to abandon the new faith, and failed, became furious, and resolved to take his life. With this view they placed a rope round his neck, and were fully bent on accomplishing their diabolical purpose, but when lifting him up, were suddenly and unaccountably so disconcerted that they relinquished their hold, and left him to die by some other means. All this time he continued unmoved, trusting firmly in God that either He would deliver him, or give him grace to submit with meekness to a martyr's death. He was spared, however, for nearly forty years, and his devoted and consistent life was crowned with a peaceful and triumphant death.*

At this period, the Waterford circuit included not only the city, in which the preachers resided half their time, but also Carrick-on-Suir, Clonmel, Tipperary, and Cashel, with a few places of minor importance. Some of the recent appointments had not proved very successful, but the labours of Messrs. William Smith and Lanktree, this year, were greatly blessed by God. The congregations in the city began to increase rapidly, and a quickening influence attended the preaching of the word: cases of conversion were multiplied, new classes formed, band-meetings established, the singing improved, and two galleries added to the old chapel.

At Clonmel, also, the ministry of these servants of God was much acknowledged. Many of the Lancashire Volunteers, then quartered in the town, were powerfully influenced for good, so that "devout soldiers" there were numerous. At Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary, and nearly all the rest of the circuit, except Cashel, the gospel leaven spread, the Spirit of life, love, and liberality was poured out on the people, and they devised liberal things for their ministers and for the general good. Thus, like the early churches, "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they were multiplied."

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1840, pp. 97-111.

But to return to the missionaries, who, having spent September and October in earnest and successful labours throughout the north, resolved to attack sin and superstition in the south. Mr. Graham had grave doubts as to his being equal to such an undertaking, his constitution having given way under the terrible strain to which it had been subjected. But, setting out in the name and strength of the Lord, it was to him according to his faith. During the eighteen weeks this tour lasted, he was confined to bed only five days, and that with heavy colds of which he made light. The missionaries were much cheered on their journey southward, as they preached in the streets and markets through which they passed. Even in places where they expected nothing but persecution, they saw the people weeping and praying around them. In the city of Limerick and surrounding country, "a mighty fire" was kindled, and continued burning. Several Romanists forsook their friends and all they had to follow Christ.

Having spent a month on the Limerick circuit, the missionaries proceeded to the county of Kerry, where there was a gracious outpouring of the Spirit of God, and much good resulted. They had no opposition until they came to Tralee. "Here," says Graham, "you would have imagined that hell was let loose. Though my voice is pretty loud, I could not be heard. Such shouting of men, women, and children, I think I never listened to before; and although we had four or five magistrates on our side, and officers and yeomen, and many Protestants, it did not avail." Nevertheless, the evangelists preached in the courthouse to many hundreds, yet under the protection of a guard of soldiers. One of the Romanists went up to three priests, and said, "Your people are in the dark, and so you would have it."

CHAPTER XV.

1802.

At the commencement of the year 1802, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley appear to have gone to the county of Cork. In Skibbereen and its neighbourhood, many Romanists attended the services, not a few were aroused to a sense of their spiritual danger, and the whole country appeared much moved. In the market the missionaries were heard gladly, and the next day being Sunday, the people flocked about them in hundreds. During the service, a priest came up and tried cavalry-preaching after his manner, "riding furiously through the crowd, and lashing with his whip on every hand," while the poor people ran hither and thither, tumbling one over another. He then called them to the chapel and lectured them; but a Roman Catholic gentleman lectured him, and said he would write to the Bishop, and have him discarded. The evangelists held their ground, and preached on "after the hurry was over," the Romanists listening in both street and chapel with hearts greatly subdued, and some of them saying they would follow the missionaries through the world.

At Bantry, the preachers had a good time, both in the market and within doors, the power of the Lord descending mightily on the people. Mr. Graham thought Satan was very destitute of friends here, for no one molested them but an old woman, who made a great noise.

At Bandon, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley were joined by Mr. Kane, and laboured for six or seven days in and around the town, with abundant tokens of the Lord's blessing. When thus in full and happy activity, they heard that Mrs. Graham was dying, and set out at once for Monaghan, preaching by the way at Cork, Kinsale, and many other places; and yet, in five

days and a half, riding about two hundred and thirty miles. On arriving at their destination, happily they found the object of their solicitude recovering.

On March 17th, Graham wrote to Dr. Coke, from Monaghan, giving his impressions with regard to the work in the districts of the south just visited. He exulted in the fact that the priests could not prevent their people from attending the services. Some Methodists, he found, thought if the downfall of Babylon was not accomplished at once, it would not come at all; but he hoped, after he had been seven times round the island, the walls would come tumbling down. "His seven times" truly "need a more patient interpretation than even he was prepared to give them."

The missionaries soon set out again for Limerick, Cork, and Waterford, making another tour of twelve weeks. Mr. Lanktree took his place with them on horseback in the streets of Clonmel, where they were violently opposed by the mob, but preached with fearless fidelity. A sort of madman was set up to preach in derision, but did little harm. Next day, when the missionaries again appeared, the disturbers advanced, blowing a horn. Some influential members of the Society of Friends went to a magistrate, and applied for protection, which they obtained. On the third day, when the evangelists again took the streets, some women assailed them with bitter and wicked words, but were overcome by a powerful appeal of Mr. Ouseley. Then the men began picking up stones and dirt to pelt them, but were seized by the soldiers, and carried off to prison. As the preachers left the town, they were once more attacked, though little hurt. Their visit, however, tended much to promote the cause of truth in the town. At Waterford, also, both in public and private, their word was with power.

The labours of others, as well as the missionaries, were greatly acknowledged of God. Mr. William Smith, in describing a meeting held at Clonmel, in April, says:—"We turned it into a love-feast; but tongue cannot tell, or pen write, a description of the overwhelming power of saving grace which fell on the people. The oldest Methodists present never remembered such a time; and I am sure I never saw anything equal to it, nor ever expect to see such a sight again, till I stand before the

throne. It will surely never be forgotten in Clonmel." Every person present seemed filled with the power and glory of God.

Castlepoles, the residence of Mr. Thomas Hewett, was the scene of many gracious visitations from above, particularly on one occasion at this period, when a vast congregation assembled from all the country round, even as far as Longford. Seven preachers were present, including Messrs. Rennick and Pedlow. The latter preached from Genesis xix. 17; and the Spirit of the Lord was poured out abundantly. There was a great breaking down; the meeting was adjourned to a barn, continued until late at night, and many were converted, including the mother of the Rev. Robert Hewett, who had walked six miles to be present.

While thus the work of evangelization made steady progress, there was also much material prosperity. Many new chapels were erected and old ones enlarged, in order to meet the increasing requirements of the Society. About two years previously, during the superintendence of Mr. Lanktree, a suitable site having been obtained in Allen street, Wexford, a chapel was commenced, but for want of funds remained unfinished. The preachers now on the circuit, having been encouraged by a subscription of fifty pounds, from Mr. George Donovan, took up the project heartily. Mr. Mayne wrote an account of his Christian experience and call to the ministry, entitled "A Mite to the Treasury," to which Mr. Worrell appended a poem; the pamphlet was sold to aid in completing the building in Wexford, as well as another new preaching-house in Hacketstown. Both edifices were thus finished, the former being opened in May by Messrs. William Smith and Lanktree.

In Sligo, the old chapel in Bridge street, having proved insufficient for the congregations, a new and more commodious building was erected in Linenhall street, and opened by Mr. Alcorn in the spring of this year. In Lurgan, also, the house opened by Mr. Wesley twenty-four years previously, having proved too small for the Society, another and more convenient chapel was built.

Reference has already been made to the proposal of Mr. Averell that a preaching-house should be erected in Coleraine. He heard nothing more of the matter, until he received a letter requesting him to open it. This invitation he accepted, and

thus set apart what was considered then a commodious and beautiful building for the worship of God. He writes: "While we dedicated the house and ourselves to Him, He not only filled the place, but also our hearts with His glorious presence." At the close of the opening services, a number of friends met for tea. In the course of the evening, Mr. Galt stated that the new chapel had cost £500, of which £300 had been subscribed; and in response to the appeal of Mr. Averell, he generously and promptly undertook to pay off the entire balance.

Returning from Coleraine, Mr. Averell preached within the uncovered walls of a new chapel in Portadown. Chiefly through the energy and at the expense of Mr. Shillington, this building was completed, and at the close of the year opened for public worship. Soon after the house was thus finished, Mrs. Robb commenced in it a Sunday school, which was one of the first established in this part of the country.

The Conference met on July the 2nd, with Dr. Coke as usual in the chair, and Mr. John Kerr, secretary. Ten candidates were received on trial, amongst whom were John Wilson, jun. of Tanderagee, James M'Cutcheon and William Harrison of Newtown-stewart, John Howe of Cork, John Remmington of Cloughjordan, Charles M'Cord, Henry Webb, James Rutledge, and Robert Strong. The increase in membership amounted to nearly two thousand five hundred, which is thus gratefully acknowledged in the Address to the British Conference: "That gracious Providence, which has so highly favoured us hitherto, has been peculiarly gracious to our Connexion this last year; for, although there has not been so large an addition to our Societies as in the year immediately preceding, yet there has been a most blessed work indeed, two thousand souls and upwards being added to our number, among whom are several poor Catholics, who were rescued from the errors of superstition, and brought to worship God in spirit and in truth."

The three missionaries were re-appointed, together with a Mr. Thomas Allen, who was associated with Mr. Kane.

A serious debate took place on the propriety of women preaching and exhorting; and notwithstanding the manifest success which had attended the labours of Miss Cambridge and Mrs. George Brown, hostility to female preaching had become so strong that

the Conference passed a resolution, affirming "that it is contrary both to Scripture and prudence that women should preach or exhort in public," and directing that tickets be withheld from any who persisted in doing so. By this act Miss Cambridge was at once excluded from the Methodist Society, and deprived of the use of the chapels and other premises; but she did not on that account give up the work to which she believed God had called her. Conscious of the purity of her motives, she resolved to pursue the course marked by Providence, leaving her cause in the hands of Him who judgeth right; and she never had reason to regret her determination. Her sphere of usefulness gradually extended to almost every part of the kingdom; and while heartily sympathizing with other Churches, Methodism continued to hold the foremost place in her affections to the end of life.

A Book room for the publication, as well as the sale of Methodist literature, having been opened in Whitefriar street, it was placed under the management of a committee of seven, with Mr. Joyce as steward. This undertaking included the publication of a monthly Magazine,* being a reprint of that brought out in England, with such omissions and additions as the preachers stationed in Dublin thought proper.

Immediately after Conference, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley set out for the north. In travelling from Dublin, they talked to the people and distributed tracts, lifting up a voice of warning in every place through which they passed. In one village, while thus engaged, the people fell on their knees upon the road; and Ouseley, sitting on his horse, prayed with them. When he left, they "poured blessings" after him; while he went on his way, reflecting on the change that would take place, when the priest saw the papers and soured their minds. At Aughnacloy, there was a vast congregation, that listened "with deep attention, and with many sighs and tears." At Rockcorry, the house was thronged, and the power of the Lord was blessedly present, several were led to decide for God, and every heart seemed to feel deeply the influence of the Holy Spirit. At the fair of Killashandra, the missionaries were surrounded by a multitude of poor Catholics, who appeared exceedingly glad to see them once more, and

* Commenced in January, 1802.

listened with deep feeling to the word preached. At Ballyconnell market, the people gave an attentive hearing, and the hearts of many Romanists were greatly moved.

At Lisleen, in the chapel, the crowd was such that it was impossible to kneel, and the feeling of those present was remarkable even for the meetings of Graham and Ouseley. At Omagh, Protestants and Catholics listened with flowing tears, and cried, "It is all right, all true." And at Fintona, "almost all the market" assembled round the missionaries.

At this time, Mr. Matthew Stewart, the chairman of the Clones district, wrote to Dr. Coke, stating that there were seventy-two members of the Society in the district who had been Roman Catholics; and though the priests had employed every art to terrify them, such as cursing, ringing the bell, and extinguishing the candle, they remained faithful. Only a week previously a young man had been seized, and after various attempts to persuade him had failed, the priest cried out, "Speaking will not do," and began to cast salt and water upon him, at the same time repeating the words, "Go out, Graham;" but the exorcism proved equally unsuccessful. Mr. Stewart also states his intention of specially inviting the Roman Catholics to the succeeding love-feast, and presenting each with a copy of the Word of God.*

Towards the close of November, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley set out on an evangelistic tour to the south, during which they first visited the county of Wicklow. At Rosanna, the people were greatly moved, especially a number of children supported and educated by the charity of Mrs. Tighe. At Wicklow, on the congregations retiring from their respective places of worship, the missionaries appeared in the street, and while Graham preached and Ouseley exhorted, the people listened with deep and solemn attention. In the evening, the chapel was filled, the Lord was manifestly present, and the hearers appeared to drink in every word. Entering the house of a Mr. Tackaberry, a young woman, looking first at one of the preachers and then at the other, said, "That is the man I remember to have seen in my dream. I saw two, but I recognised his face particularly; and methought that he did me good, and that many were blessed." So it was. "That

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1803, p. 375.

night God so owned the word that there was a cry and a shaking." One Catholic girl professed to have obtained peace in believing, and joined the Society. The family of the house also were much blessed. In the market at Rathdrum, there were present a great multitude of Catholics, one of whom, at least, was awakened to a sense of guilt and danger. At Arklow, the audience was numerous; a few Romanists cursed the missionaries, and were about to resort to violence, when some soldiers interfered and secured quietness. A young clergyman listened for a short time, and then tried to get the churchwardens to help him to stop the service, but they declined. Then he applied to the military authorities, and they also refused to interfere. When thus he could get no one to assist him he sent word to the servants of God not to come again to the town, or they would not get off so well.

In Hacketstown, after mass, the missionaries went to the cross, and found the street full of people. While Ouseley preached he observed the congregation become uneasy and frightened, the result of the priest appearing in sight; but as he quietly passed on, the service was continued in peace, and many seemed powerfully impressed by the truth. A letter was subsequently sent to the missionaries from this town, saying the people greatly wished their return, although the priest was doing his utmost to prevent them from ever hearing the Gospel again.

The missionaries now entered the county of Wexford; and, on arriving at Gorey, when the people saw them, they ran in crowds, and were very attentive. In the evening, the court-house was well filled, tears flowed from many eyes, and some cried aloud for mercy. At Ferns, however, the people seemed very careless. A good many were present at the commencement of the service, but most of them soon left. Thence the evangelists rode to Newtownbarry, where the people assembled in large numbers, and listened with attention and deep emotion. On the following Sabbath morning, the preaching-room was well filled, and the power of the Lord accompanied His word. After church, Ouseley preached in the street to a numerous congregation, and all was peace. It had been said that the great man of the town threatened to stop the missionaries; but he rode up, listened for a little, and then went quietly away.

The first visit paid by Graham and Ouseley to Enniscorthy

was attended with signal success. Mounted on their horses, they proceeded to the principal street; crowds gathered around them, the singing of the first hymn had a wonderful effect, and the word which followed came with power to the hearts of the people. Some of the blessed fruits of that day's work were seen a long time subsequently.

At Wexford, the missionaries took their position in the Bullring, or market-place, the majority of the hearers being Romanists. While Ouseley preached, a man standing on a scaffold pelted him with some rubbish and stones; but another, who was present, seized the support of the platform, and threatened to dash the unfortunate man to pieces, if he persisted. Peace was thus secured, and the people listened to the word with solemn awe. Amongst those present was a lady, who at the close of the service, observing that the missionaries appeared doubtful as to where they should go, invited them to her house. By this act a comfortable home was secured for the preachers, which continued for half a century, first in the house of her father, Mr. Robert Atkin, and then in that of her brother, Captain Atkin, R.N. Moreover she herself reaped abundant benefit, becoming rich in Christian graces, and delighting to minister to the comfort of the Lord's messengers. As the wife of Mr. Rudolphus Meyer, she had the joy of having a son called to the work of the Christian ministry, who still lives to bless God for such a mother.

At Fethard, two Catholic young women were led in penitence of spirit to the foot of the Cross, one of whom had been impressed with the truth previously but was bribed to return to mass. Now she appeared thoroughly decided for God. As the missionaries proceeded on their journey, they met some people coming from mass, who were very mad and bitter, more especially against Graham, thinking that he had been a priest. Ouseley, however, spoke kindly to them, and they were thankful. None were insolent, except two or three who were under the influence of drink, and were soon silenced if not shamed. In the house at New Ross, the word was accompanied with much power. One girl on returning home, met her clergyman, and sorrowfully inquired why he had not spoken to her about her soul, and warned her of her danger.

Thus, while throughout this country were to be seen on every hand the desolations wrought by the demoniacal spirit which had possessed the poor deluded people, the streets and market-places, which had resounded with the clang of arms and the roar of cannon, echoed the joyful sound of the Gospel; and in towns and villages, which had been devastated by tumult and carnage, multitudes listened, some with bigoted gaze, others with tears, and all with curious astonishment to the glad tidings of salvation.

So far in this Romish district the missionaries were mercifully preserved from personal violence; but when in Kilkenny, they narrowly escaped with their lives. Here some persons, excited by drink, began to make a noise, and no one attempting to stop them, the uproar became so general as to drown the voices of the preachers, and compel them to desist. So they rode away, followed by the mob, shouting and throwing stones in a fearful manner. The itinerants were thus compelled to seek refuge in the barrack, until the Mayor, accompanied by some officers, arrived, and escorted them out of town, restraining with great difficulty the fury of the infatuated people. Graham escaped unhurt, but Ouseley received several severe bruises. The latter subsequently wrote to the Catholic Bishop of the diocese, complaining of the barbarous manner in which he had been treated, but received no reply. The missionaries rode at once to Leighlinbridge, "preached there that night, and had a lively, refreshing time."

Thence they proceeded to Athy, where the out-door service proved a season of rich blessing. The priest was very angry with his people for attending; but they said they would go again. In the evening, in the preaching-room, the power of the Lord accompanied His word, and some began to cry aloud, although others were much disgusted. One of the latter, Ouseley subsequently reasoned with, and he took it in good part. He was a Calvinist, and thought there had been an effort to work on the passions of the people; but soon saw that no rational exertion was wrong when the salvation of immortal souls was in question.

During this tour the missionaries preached in the streets of sixteen different towns, as well as within doors, both in town and country. As might have been expected the power of the

priests was used to oppose the work. They warned and threatened the people, inflicted penances, and in several instances rode through the congregations, and dispersed as many as possible by a liberal application of the horsewhip. Yet, notwithstanding all opposition, the men of God persevered in their work, in which success and persecution were so largely blended.

Ouseley writes, saying that there had been good accounts from Connaught, where Messrs. Kane and Allen were at work for Christ; and thus the cause prospered in both the south and west.

The marvellous success which attended the labours of the Methodists at this period could not fail to arrest public attention, and lead to the expression of various opinions. When a brother clergyman represented to Dean Beresford that the Irish missionaries were disturbing the country, he replied, "You never do any duty, and I never do any duty, and therefore I will never oppose those that are inclined to do it."* Others, however, did not act with the same discretion.

Amongst the opponents of the work were not only people of the world and emissaries of Popery, but also a few whose piety was unquestionable. Of these the principal was the Rev. John Walker, F.T.C.D., who published a pamphlet, entitled, "An Expostulatory Address to the Members of the Methodist Society in Ireland," in which he repeats some of the old and oft-refuted allegations of Toplady, Hill, and Berridge, with a spice of modern Plymouthism. Evidently he had been trying to advance his views amongst the Methodists, but failed, and ascribed his lack of success, not to the weakness of his own cause, but the organization of the Society, against which especially, by gross misrepresentation, he directs his spleen.

No Wesleyan appears to have replied just then to this production. No doubt, like Nehemiah, the preachers felt they were "doing a great work," and could not therefore come down to engage in strife. But their cause was espoused by Alexander Knox, Esq., who, in "Remarks on the Expostulatory Address," with great clearness, impartiality, and ability, exposed the fallacious reasoning and unfounded statements of his opponent.

Mr. Walker then replied to Mr. Knox in a series of seven

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1848, p. 92.

letters, similar to his "Address," but more pronounced in their Antinomianism. Soon afterwards he wrote anonymously, "Hints on Christian Fellowship, Addressed to all Believers, especially in Dublin," in which he denounced the Church as carnal, and its ritual as evil. He then wrote to the Provost stating that his sentiments were such that he could no longer conscientiously exercise any religious functions as a minister of the Establishment, and added that if, under these circumstances, he could not retain his position in the College, his letter should be considered as giving it up. But the Provost, having declined to accept this resignation, expelled him. Mr. Walker then confined his public ministrations in the Bethesda to the reading and exposition of the Scriptures without either singing or prayer, on the ground that he could not conscientiously unite with a mixed multitude in these sacred exercises. This infatuated course did not continue long; for the congregation was soon scattered, and he was deprived of the chaplaincy. In the year 1804, he formally seceded from the Church, and established a society called Separatists or Walkerites, which, although never large, exercised a very corroding influence all through the first quarter of this century. The Separatists pursued the leading evangelical clergy everywhere; poaching upon their congregations, robbing them of their most devout adherents, and representing themselves as specially and exclusively spiritual, until at length, under the guidance of John Nelson Darby, they took final shape in the sect now called Plymouth Brethren.

CHAPTER XVI.

1803.

THE attitude which ministers of the Established Church, at this period, assumed towards Methodism was exceedingly varied. A goodly number, including, in addition to those already mentioned, the Rev. Hans Caulfield, Vicar of Kilmanagh, and Archdeacon Fleury, Wesley's old antagonist, were exceedingly friendly. They cordially appreciated the good work done by the itinerants, and gave them every encouragement. Others, whatever may have been their sentiments, kept them very much to themselves, neither openly opposing nor assisting the Society. While there were not wanting those who made no secret of their hostility, and gave the cause all the opposition in their power. Amongst the latter was the Rev. Dr. Stokes of Waterford, who endeavoured, as he said himself, "to crush Methodism for ever." The ground of this attack was that the members of the Society "wrested the Scripture to their own destruction" by maintaining salvation by faith, professing to have the Spirit of God, avowing instantaneous conversion, using extempore prayer, and infringing on the established order of the Church. He, however, was ably and effectively met by Mr. William Smith, who replied in a sermon, on "Paul, thou art permitted to speak for thyself," preached to a crowded audience; so that, notwithstanding the "Samson-like effort" of the doctor, Methodism went on and increased in the city. Another and equally unsuccessful attack on the Society was made at the same time by the Rev. Wm. Stephenson, of Clonmel, who acknowledged the activity of the Methodists, but alleged it was like the zeal of Romanists, and equally injurious to the Church.

But to return to the labours of the missionaries. At the beginning of 1803, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley were in the south, the former being in delicate health, but the latter strong and active, and preaching both in and out of doors with his wonted

point and power. The previous success of the evangelists had evidently alarmed the priests, and thus roused them to increased and more vigorous opposition. Every means in their power was used to prevent the people from hearing the word preached, so that the markets and streets were the only places where they could do so with impunity, and that only on week days. On the Sabbaths, they were afraid of their ecclesiastical rulers coming on them. Numerous expedients were also employed to interrupt and disturb the services, but these hostile attempts were generally frustrated, sometimes by the military, and not unfrequently by Orangemen.

The missionaries next traversed the midland districts, and their course was a simple repetition of the same labours, interruptions, and encouragements. "Multitudes of Catholics, as well as others," says Graham, "attended our ministry in the streets and markets. It was very affecting to see the poor people weeping under the word, and some so broken down that they were not able to hold up their heads." At Athy, a young woman was awakened, who, on returning home, fell on the floor, and cried aloud for mercy. Thinking it her duty to confess to the priest, he inquired if she had heard the Methodists; and, when answered in the affirmative, asked, if she did not think it wrong to do so. She said, "No;" upon which he thrust her away, and would hear her no further; but she persevered in seeking salvation through Christ. At Clara, the missionaries were joined by Messrs. Wood and Loughed, and preached in the market to a great multitude, many of whom appeared much affected. One man cried out, "We know that you are our friends;" while the poor people around frequently prayed that God would bless His servants. At Moate, there was a large congregation, numbers of whom were deeply moved, and followed the missionaries to the preaching-house.

Thence the evangelists went to Athlone, and rode into the midst of the market. When the service began, some of the people were very restless and even insolent, but in a short time became composed, and said to each other, "Why do not the priests tell us these things?" A carriage passed by full of ladies, one of whom put out her head, and made wry faces, as a token of her displeasure at the Gospel being thus preached; but the poor

poured their blessings on the heads of the missionaries. Next day, being the Sabbath, they preached in the street to a mixed multitude, and the Lord blessed His word to many. An intelligent Romanist said, "The world will never be right till it is as these men have described;" some military officers observed "that the Government should encourage such men;" while a minister expressed his opinion, "If this method of preaching will not do, I don't know what will."

A few days later, in a town that is not named, the missionaries found the people in the street very unwilling to hear; for the priest had collected their tracts, given on the previous day, and burned them, and warned the members of his Church, at their peril, not to go near the Black-caps. Whereupon Ouseley thought it well to try something that would make them feel. Giving out the text, "Howbeit, in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," he made his voice reach the people, at least in the houses on both sides of the street, discussed the peculiar doctrines of Romanism, and insisted on the great truths of salvation. He subsequently learned that this sermon had been very useful to some Protestants, who had a great leaning to Popery.

As the evangelists rode along a road in the county of Monaghan, Mr. Barber pointed them to a little cabin, where a poor Catholic woman had lived, who about three weeks previously, being seriously ill, desired that a Methodist should be sent for. Her friends inquired if she would not have the priest, but she answered, "No, I don't want him." Mr. Barber, having heard this, went to see her, and to his surprise, found her rejoicing in her Saviour. "The Lord God," said she, "has pardoned all my sins, and filled my heart with His love. Glory to His name!" It appeared she had heard the Gospel preached by the missionaries, and it had proved the power of God unto her salvation. When prayer was proposed, she answered, "No, but sing—I wish to sing or hear my Redeemer's praises sung," and in this spirit of holy joy she passed to the home above. No doubt there were many similar triumphs of Divine grace obtained through the general mission, of which there is no record on earth; but they are recorded on high.

At Smithborough, Ouseley preached in the open air to a

congregation that no house available could contain, and "had a very powerful and blessed season." The presence of the Holy One was greatly manifested at a subsequent love-feast, towards the close of which a prayer-meeting was held, when many cried for mercy, some of whom obtained peace and joy in believing. At Dungannon, in the market, there was an exceedingly large and deeply attentive audience; but the service was rudely interrupted by a recruiting-sergeant, who led his drumming party to the middle of the congregation. After a while, he was called off, and thus the missionaries were enabled to conclude in peace. At Stewartstown, they could hardly restrain the poor Romanists from making a collection, and displeased them by declining their offer. During this tour of six weeks in the north, the evangelists preached in fairs, markets, and fields, but were not able to supply one half of the places that required their help. "Crowds of Catholics and Protestants appeared athirst for the word."

Graham, being now laid up with an attack of influenza, Ouseley, accompanied by Mr. Dinnen, went to Cookstown, and had the greater part of the market people to hear him. At night, he preached again to a crowded audience, that seemed much affected. Next morning, being the Sabbath, the people crowded in from every quarter, some Catholics coming three or four miles to hear; and the power of God seemed to reach every heart. Almost the whole congregation was in tears. Thence the servants of God went to Coal Island, and proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to hundreds, including many Romanists. On the Charlemont circuit, the people attended in crowds; and the Catholics present being determined to hear again, Ouseley preached in a garden, when "all prejudice seemed to fly away." In the market of Ballyhaise, there was an attentive multitude, the cry of whom was "'Tis all true! 'tis all true!" At Clonkee, the people, amongst whom were some Romanists, were deeply affected; and most of them on the following Sabbath followed the missionary to Redhill. At Belturbet, there was a great breaking down; one young man, a Catholic, who had been in the army, having cried for and obtained mercy, stood up and testified that the Lord had pardoned all his sins. In passing through Cavan, Ouseley learned that a man was about to be executed; so, with two Church ministers, he visited the prisoner, and when

they left, still continued with him ; and at the place of execution seized the opportunity of addressing the people, both in English and Irish.

The Longford circuit was next visited, through almost the whole of which Ouseley preached, and had blessed meetings. On the Sabbath some hundreds were present, who listened with great attention. A few drunken men endeavoured to interrupt, but were soon compelled to leave. At Granard, in the market, the people seemed to devour every word. A schoolmaster came to oppose, which caused some commotion ; but he soon ran away, and the rest of the audience continued to listen with eagerness.

In the beginning of February, Mr. Averell, returned to Tentower, and soon afterwards, hearing of the death of his much esteemed friend, Mr. Tidd of Cloughjordan, went thither and preached his funeral sermon. Thence, proceeding on an evangelistic tour, he was joined by Mr. Campion of Maryborough, a local preacher, by whom he was accompanied through the counties of Limerick and Kerry. While together they preached alternately, morning and evening. Parting with his friend at Killarney, Mr. Averell continued his route through the county of Cork, and returned home by Waterford and Kilkenny, concluding the labours of the tour, by preaching in the church of Kilmanagh. Another journey, on which he soon entered, embracing the Carlow and Wicklow circuits, fully occupied this devoted evangelist until the close of June.

At this period there lived in the neighbourhood of Moira, a young man, named James Creevy, who was awakened through the preaching of the word, and led to the Saviour. One of the firstfruits of his conversion was his holding prayer-meetings in his father's house, and in the houses of some of his neighbours, to whom his blameless character made him welcome. After some time a man, named Billy Rutherford, said to him, "I think it a pity of you, Jemmy dear, holding these meetings your lone. I have a notion of trying to help you." "God bless you, Billy," said the young convert, "I'd be glad that you would." "Well, I'm getting a prayer by heart, and as soon I can say it off, I'll go with you and say it for you ; and sure that will be some help." James did not know what to say to this getting a prayer by heart, and had some doubt whether it would be of

any use in the meeting, but thinking that the attempt might be made a blessing to the man himself, said, "Well, well, make haste, man, for I want help badly." After a while the two met again, and in reply to an inquiry about the prayer, Billy answered, "Oh, no, I haven't it well enough yet." But in a few days later, at the beginning of a meeting he whispered, "Jemmy, I think I'd be able to help you this evening. Just call on me by-and-by, and I'll try." All the fears of James about the prayer got by heart were revived, but he could not draw back; so after a hymn had been sung and prayer offered, he said, "Billy Rutherford, you'll pray now." Billy began his prayer, at which he had long laboured, but did not get farther than the second sentence, when he stuck fast. He went back to the beginning, like children reciting at school, but it was no use; the words he had stored up, as he thought, would not come. He then turned to the Lord's prayer, but became so disturbed after repeating a few words that he had to stop altogether; and the meeting was brought to a rather abrupt termination. Then the poor fellow, overcome by shame, seized his hat and almost ran from the house, but had not gone far, when James overtook him, crying bitterly. Now and then his grief and shame would break out in words: "Oh! Jemmy, to think that after all my father spent on me, I wasn't able to say a bit of a prayer, and me wanting so much to help you! No, nor able to say even the Lord's prayer. God help me! I believe I don't know how to pray at all." At last he threw himself down on the roadside in an agony of distress, and the great Spirit began to convince him that though he thought he had religion, because he went to church, read the Bible, and said his prayers, he really had none. His convictions deepened, as day by day he thought on the matter. He began to pray in the poor publican's fashion, and, before long, the Lord showed His mercy to him, and granted him His salvation. He became very useful in the Society as a leader, and amongst his neighbours in various ways, and left behind him sons who also were pious and devoted men. Through life James Creevy also consistently walked with God, and endeavoured to serve his generation. It was a pleasure to meet him in his old age, and to witness how his dark eyes would brighten and sparkle as he spoke of his Master's care for him,

and of his love for His God, or as he related some incident connected with his early endeavours to do good.*

The Conference met on July the 1st, with Dr. Coke in the chair, and Mr. A. Hamilton, junior, secretary. Two candidates were admitted on trial, Thomas W. Doolittle of Dublin, and John Rogers. Three deaths were reported, Samuel Bates; Joseph Anderson, who "died a triumphant witness of the power of the Lord Jesus to save to the uttermost;" and William Jackson, whose last words were, "Christ is precious." Lawrence Kane retired from the work as a general missionary, and subsequently went to America, where he became an acceptable and useful minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Thus the missionaries were now reduced to two, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley. Mr. Ferguson was appointed steward or treasurer of the Contingent Fund, Mr. Mayne of the Education Fund, and Mr. Averell of the Preachers' Fund.

There was a decrease in the membership of upwards of two thousand, evidently occasioned by a reaction after the great ingathering of the two previous years. "This," say the members of the Conference, "was to be expected, and does not discourage us, because we believe that the work of true religion has deepened in those that remain."

It was reported that the beautiful chapel in Roscrea, not having been settled on the Conference plan, had been taken forcible possession of by the friends of the Evangelical Society, thus placing the Connexion under the necessity of building another house.† Permission was therefore given for a special collection, on behalf of the new erection, in the adjoining circuits. Similar leave was also granted for new chapels in Skibbereen, Maguiresbridge, Rathmelton, and Cookstown.

Seventeen hundred Bibles having been sent from London to be distributed throughout Ireland by the preachers, a special committee was appointed to regulate all matters in respect to this generous grant.

A cordial fraternal Address was sent for the first time to

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1877, p. 195.

† Those who thus wrested this chapel from the Society did not make much of it; so that it was afterwards turned into a store, then into a public house, and at last pulled down to make way for a new line of road.

the General American Conference, the members of which were earnestly requested to permit Dr. Coke to return and visit Ireland, as formerly. This was subsequently granted by the brethren in the United States, under certain expressed conditions.

Mr. Doolittle was appointed to the Wicklow circuit, and on arriving at Rosanna, was thus accosted by a son of Mrs. Tighe: "What's your name?" "My name is Doolittle." "Doolittle! That's a queer name to have upon a man. Well, come and preach us a sermon like yourself, short and fat." Mr. Kyle, who narrated this incident, considered that the speaker, notwithstanding his simplicity, displayed both wit and wisdom, as he thus humorously claimed from the preacher what should characterize every sermon—brevity and weight.

Mr. Lanktree was appointed to the Carlow circuit, where he found a few warm friends and useful leaders, but the Societies in general were weak and widely scattered. In the town of Carlow, the cause was not prosperous, the people being distracted and much injured by a few contentious persons; the chapel also was small and out of repair. In the Colliery, a division had taken place, through one of the members having become postmaster, and thus doing business on the Lord's day. There was an unpretentious chapel at Bawnlea, and also good congregations, of godly Palatines. At Kilkenny, the preaching-house was in a backward part of the city, the Society not large, and the attendance fluctuating. Soon, however, there were tokens of spiritual prosperity. At the September quarterly meetings, the Spirit of God was graciously poured out. Mr. Lanktree also met the leaders, and carefully inquired into their religious experience, and fidelity in their work. This gave much satisfaction, and the good effects were apparent. Amongst other tokens of the Divine favour was the raising up at Moneybeg or Bagenalstown, a promising local preacher, named John Joyce. He was a young man of good report, deeply pious, and well qualified for public speaking. His labours also were much blessed, so that he prepared a large room in his own house for the accommodation of an increasing congregation and prosperous society.

A most formidable opponent of Methodism now appeared in the Rev. William Hales, D.D., rector of Killashandra, a man of learning, and the author of some valuable works on chronology

and ecclesiastical antiquities, but a stranger to the nature of the Spirit's operations on the human heart. He published a pamphlet under the title, "Methodism Inspected," being an attack on the Society in general, and the missionaries in particular. That which specially provoked the ire of the writer was the conduct of the itinerants in preaching in the streets on horseback, thus casting pearls before swine, and courting persecution. He severely censures them for wearing "black coifs or skull caps, like the Puritans,"—a usage condemned by St. Paul,—and also for their teaching in regard to sin and the work of the Holy Spirit. The *Christian Observer*, a respectable English periodical, in a review of Dr. Hales' pamphlet, not only endorsed these censures, but in addition grossly misrepresented the teaching of Methodism on the subjects referred to. These strictures called forth a reply from the Rev. Joseph Benson, which he happily entitled, "The Inspector of Methodism Inspected, and the Christian Observer Observed." In this publication, he shows in a clear and convincing light the soundness of the doctrines which had been thus unjustly impugned, and the scriptural character of the conduct so hastily condemned; at the same time proving that the principles of these censors were as defective and unsound as their censures had been unmerited and unjust.

Soon after Conference, the missionaries set out for the south. On August 4th, in passing through a town in the county of Wexford, Ouseley spoke to some, who listened with gratitude, and in the evening he preached again in a place where his voice could be heard in two little streets or lanes full of poor, benighted Romanists. Many came out and listened, while others walked carelessly past. The word seemed blunted, as if ineffectual, a drunken soldier distracting the attention of the audience for some time, yet good was done. Next day, in the market of Newtownbarry, the missionaries rode to a convenient part of the town, and hundreds assembled to hear Graham preach, and then as Ouseley exhorted, a colonel requested them to remove elsewhere, which they did, and the people followed. As the missionary continued his exhortation, the Spirit of grace and supplication was poured out on the congregation, and all wept together. "Such a time in the streets among Romanists," says Ouseley, "I did not see, that I remember, these four years."

The next glimpse we have of the missionaries is in Mayo, during the month of October. Every town was open to them, many of the gentry attended the services, listening with deep interest to the word preached; and if any rowdies were disposed to give annoyance, such was the disposition of the people in general that they durst not attempt it. The poor frequently came in crowds to hear, and listened with great respect and delight. "Their hearts often melted like wax before the fire, and their tears flowed freely." In several places they came out at night, and filled the houses where the servants of God preached. Tracts also were received by them with the greatest eagerness. The missionaries thought it expedient to visit some of the Romish clergy, and lay before them the doctrines they preached, and were courteously received. One of the bishops said he was thankful to them for calling, and that while they preached such things, they ought not to be impeded.

Mr. Averell having been appointed representative to the British Conference, on his return prepared for an evangelistic tour in the north. "The kingdom," he says, "was in a state of great alarm, in consequence of a threatened invasion by the French, and the people were so engrossed with military preparations that the cause of religion was greatly injured." While in Dublin, however, he was much encouraged "by the steady, uniform piety of the Society," and also by the opposition given to theatrical amusements by many of the citizens. A sense of their pernicious influence, led to the drawing out of a petition against the erection of a new play-house. Although this was signed by many, and supported by the Lord Mayor, it did not succeed; yet it afforded a pleasing evidence of the influence of religion in the metropolis. At Oldcastle, Mr. Averell had a happy time with Mr. and Mrs. Henry, and saw fruit to his labours. At Mount Nugent, in the house of Mr. Spinks, there was a large congregation, several of whom had recently become subjects of saving grace. At Clones, Mr. Averell had a profitable season both in preaching and in meeting the Society. Thence he passed through Fermanagh, Tyrone, and Londonderry, and in most of the places visited was favoured with gracious manifestations of the Divine presence. At Coleraine, he had a happy Christmas morning; and in the evening the Lord accompanied His word with much power to the

hearts of those who heard. At Bellaghy, there were cheering indications of good done; and on the last day of December, in the new chapel, Ballinderry, the Lord vouchsafed His gracious presence, both at the quarterly meeting and the watch-night service.

Mr. John Hamilton was now stationed in this neighbourhood, and amongst those converted, through the Divine blessing on his labours, was a young man, named William Reilly, who subsequently occupied a leading position in the Methodist Church. His parents had been for some years members of the Society, and he, though a native of Lucan, resided at this period in Cookstown. Here he was brought into, and continued for about twelve months in great distress about his soul, until the Lord lifted on him the light of His countenance. The young convert then became a member of a class met by Peter Potter, which proved the means of much spiritual profit; and, thus prepared and qualified, soon engaged in work for Christ, with characteristic fervour and success.*

Leave having been given by the Conference, a chapel was built at Newmarket or Pallaskenry. Lady Charleville granted a site free of rent; and the erection of the new edifice was greatly promoted by Mr. Evans, a gentleman of property in the neighbourhood, a good man, and warmly attached to Methodism, if not actually a member of the Society. Captain Lane, whose remains were subsequently buried within the enclosure, also took an active part in the work, and occasionally held services in the chapel.†

Just as the year closed, the venerable John Johnson passed in triumph to the home above. He had been received on trial as a preacher in 1755; and laboured with much success for sixteen years. He then settled in Lisburn, and continued to render good service to Methodism. His sufferings during his last illness were excruciating, yet no murmur escaped his lips, nor did he apparently at any time lose a sense of the gracious presence of God. His last words were: "Satan is conquered at the feet of Jesus. I feel God is in me, and I in Him. There is but a step—no not a step—between me and eternal glory." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

* Unpublished MSS., in the hands of the Rev. J. W. M'Kay, D.D.

† *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1885, p. 33.

CHAPTER XVII.

1804.

AT the beginning of 1804, Mr. Averell, continuing his journey, visited Cookstown, Dungannon, Coal Island, and Tamnaghmore. At the last named place, such was the concourse of people who assembled, that, though it was the depth of winter, he was obliged to preach in the open air; and at Lisburn many were compelled to go away for want of room. His next visits were to Lambeg and Willmount, after which he spent two days in Belfast, and thence went to Comber, where he addressed a large congregation in the church. At Downpatrick, the Lord gave him some happy seasons. At Killough, he preached in the church, and had a good audience, a considerable part of whom consisted of the Kildare militia; and the word was accompanied with much power. At Strangford, he preached in the new chapel, erected by Mr. George Moore; and though the day was very stormy, there was a large attendance, and many felt it to be a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. At Dundalk, the devoted evangelist notices the death of the Rev. Mr. Montgomery, the venerable rector of the parish, who had long been a steady friend to Methodism, and whose removal he considered a serious loss to the Society. Next day he preached in Collon to a considerable number of attentive hearers, many of whom appeared deeply affected. In Drogheda, he found the Society much alive to God, and a spirit of hearing among the people in general. In Dublin, the work prospered much. He then visited a number of places in the south, where as usual a Divine unction accompanied his ministry, especially in Limerick, where a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place.

During the first quarter of this year, Graham was very delicate, frequent exposure and constant labour having greatly enervated him, so that he had scarcely a week's health without

more or less interruption. But Ouseley continued in his wonted mental and physical vigour, the Lord having given him, as he expresses it, "bones of iron and brass." His brother missionary, not being able to assist him as heretofore, it is no wonder that at night he felt weary and exhausted, yet in the morning he was fresh as ever. The scene of the labours of these indefatigable evangelists at this period was the counties of Mayo and Limerick, where they found the Romanists "more friendly than ever." They attended the services in crowds, especially in the markets, where they could not be so well watched by the priests, listened with great delight to the word preached, and were ready to trample on each other in their eagerness to obtain tracts. In Mayo particularly the meetings, both in and out of doors, were largely attended, and much owned of the Lord. The priests in Munster were much more hostile than in Connaught, yet even there the people would and did hear the missionaries. In Limerick, on a market day, Ouseley went through the streets, having his pockets full of papers, standing now here and now there, reading with an audible voice an Irish hymn, or some striking paragraph, speaking for a few minutes, giving away his papers, and so passing on, he was received with looks of kindness and love.

During spring, the indications of a revival on the Carlow circuit became general. The congregations were refreshed with gracious visitations of Divine mercy, and several new societies were formed. One of these was in the village of Littleton, of which Captain Grady was the lord of the soil. He determined there should be no Methodism on his estate, and therefore threatened Mr. Colclough, who entertained the preachers, with the consequence if he persisted in this. Having heard of these threats, Mr. Lanktree wrote a remonstrance, and sent it, with a copy of "Alexander's Reasons for Methodism," by Mr. Colclough, who committed it to the care of a yeoman. Although the poor fellow knew nothing of the contents of the packet, on delivering it, Captain Grady threw the whole into the fire, ordered the man to be arrested, and threatened terrible things against Mr. Lanktree, if he should dare to return to the neighbourhood. The son of this liberal landlord, the Rev. Standish Grady, had charge of the parish, and preached against the Methodists most violently;

but this only served to unite the little Society closer to Christ and to each other. Finding all his efforts fruitless, this clergyman then went to the Archbishop of the diocese, the Hon. C. Brodrick, to make his complaints, and inquire how to proceed; but his Grace reprimanded him for his intolerant conduct, and sent him home a sadder, if not a wiser man.

Another small society was formed at Augherone, near Leighlinbridge, under the following circumstances. Mr. Lanktree, having been directed to ride across that mountain, to shorten one of his journeys, his horse got swamped, so that he could not get extricated without assistance. At length an old man, named Condell, kindly helped the itinerant, and conducted him to a group of houses, in one of which he lived. Mr. Lanktree proposed to preach at this hamlet on his return, provided a congregation should be collected. Condell replied, he expected the preacher would have a good reception, for their clergyman had been lately to visit them, and had particularly inquired "whether those good men, the Methodist preachers, had been there," which left a favourable impression on the minds of the people. When Mr. Lanktree came back, he was received most heartily; several were converted, and a class formed. The clergyman then paid another visit to the place, and was informed that the good men had come, and preached, and those that had received the word were formed into a society and doing well. He replied they had gone too far in becoming a society, and that he must come himself and hold meetings at the house the class was accustomed to meet at; but this threat he did not carry out. Condell himself, having obtained mercy, ripened for heaven; and the Lord took him to Himself, leaving a number of his relatives on the way to Zion.

The death of Eliza Thorpe of Belbow, which occurred at this time, was most affecting and eventful in its results. She and her brother were in the Society, but the other members of the family were opposed to their connection with Methodism. Miss Thorpe was present at the June love-feast at the Colliery, and spoke with freedom and power of her happiness in God. On returning home the horse on which she rode ran away, and she was thrown off and killed. Some of the friends feared that this calamity would be regarded by the family as a judgment on her

for attending the Wesleyan services; but it was received in a very different spirit. Mr. Lanktree was requested to preach the funeral sermon, which he did to a vast assembly that appeared much affected by the word, and it proved the beginning of a new era in the history of that household, who thenceforward identified themselves with the people of God.

In the early days of Methodism the preachers were frequently much owned in their visits to prisoners under sentence of death. As time passed on, this sphere of Christian work, when accessible, was not neglected. Thus at the spring Assizes, in Enniskillen, a man named Harper, having been found guilty of murder, and sentenced to death, was at once visited by the preachers of the circuit and some young men of the Society. At first he appeared indifferent; but the servants of God remained with him, earnestly exhorting him to repentance, and pleading, one after another at the throne of grace on his behalf, until at length the conscience of the wretched criminal was awakened, and he joined in fervent prayer for pardoning mercy. While thus engaged, after some time, the glory of God seemed to fill the cell, and Harper cried out, "O Lord, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me," and continued in this frame of joyful confidence to the end. Having expressed a wish to be accompanied to the place of execution by Mr. Hansbrow, and also that he might pass from earth listening to the praises of God, to join in them in heaven, the preacher gave out, at the foot of the scaffold, the familiar hymn, beginning, "There is a fountain filled with blood," and it was sung with powerful effect on the multitude present; the soul of the poor penitent was then launched into the eternal world.* "Was not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

At Banbridge, Mr. John Kinnear, in conjunction with Mr. James Craig, established the first Sunday school in this neighbourhood, and it proved the means of much good. The services commenced, nineteen years previously, in John Bradford's stable having been removed to his kitchen, and then to two upper rooms, were next conducted in the market-house. Here the beautiful singing, for which the Methodists in the town became

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1812, pp. 217-21.

famed, attracted large congregations of the respectable inhabitants; so that a chapel became necessary. This was at length completed, and the opening service was conducted by Mr. Daniel M'Mullen, who preached from 1 Kings viii. 27: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain Thee, how much less this house that I have builded!" *

The Conference met on July 13th. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. William Smith, secretary. John Hadden of the Newry circuit, and David Campbell of Manorhamilton, having been called out after the previous Conference, were received as having travelled one year; and six candidates were admitted on trial. These included William Peacock of Boyle, William Crook of Cosbystown, Castor Clements, and John Joyce. The reception of eight young men into full connexion proved a season of remarkable interest to a crowded audience.

It was agreed that a fine of sixpence should be paid by any member absent after the roll was called; two shillings and sixpence for writing on any subject except Conference business; and one guinea for bringing a wife to Conference, unless in case of absolute necessity.

There was reported a decrease in the membership of about sixteen hundred and fifty, which led to much heart searching. "Every one," says Mr. Averell, "seemed to be humbled before God, as were the disciples when our Lord told them 'that one of them would betray Him;' and each was disposed to put the same question as they did, 'Lord, is it I?'" Three hours were spent in discussing what should be done to promote a revival of religion, "during which the skies dropped fatness," and the Divine presence was realized with a melting power, such as those present had never before witnessed in Conference. It was resolved to seek a renewed baptism of the Holy Ghost; to be more careful in giving God all the glory for the good done; and to be more simple, earnest, evangelical, and practical in preaching.

The staff of general missionaries was doubled: Messrs. Graham and Ouseley being appointed to Leinster and Connaught, and Messrs. William Hamilton and James Bell to Ulster. Although

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1868, p. 143.

Mr. Hamilton could not preach in Irish he had special qualifications for missionary work. Homely in speech, affectionate in manner, and intensely zealous for his Master, he was endowed with a mind of uncommon originality. Sententious, pointed, and full of humorous illustrations, his sermon could not fail to arrest attention and be long remembered.

Four brethren were set apart for continental and foreign missionary work: James M'Mullen, for Gibraltar; John Remington, for Newfoundland; and John Rutledge of Manorhamilton and Joseph Morrison, for the West Indies. In due time, Mr. M'Mullen, with his wife and child, embarked for his appointment, where, after a stormy passage, they arrived in September. On landing they found the yellow fever raging among the wasted population, with more than usual violence and malignity. The fatal disease had invaded almost every family, and there was scarcely a house in which there was not at least one dead. The missionary's little child had scarcely breathed the tainted air when she was seized with the malady. On October the 10th, the anxious father, fatigued with constant watching by the couch of affliction, was himself prostrated with the fever, and on the 18th he was a corpse. Mrs. M'Mullen had borne up during these days of woe with wonderful fortitude, being sustained by her unwavering faith in the wisdom and goodness of God; but at the hour which ended the life of her husband, she was herself smitten with the shaft of the pestilence, and in a few days followed him to the world of spirits. Contrary to all expectation, the little orphan survived, and, as soon as possible, was sent under suitable care to England. A kind Providence provided for her a home in the family of Dr. Clarke, who, with his excellent partner, brought up the little girl as their own child, and had the satisfaction of seeing her rise into life well-educated, amiable, and pious. She became the wife of a Methodist preacher, the Rev. John Rigg, and lived to see her children the subjects of Divine grace; one of her sons being the Rev. J. H. Rigg, D.D., the esteemed Principal of the Westminster Normal Institution.

Mr. Ouseley had long felt the need to be for an additional means of instruction in connection with the preaching of the word, such as the circulation of properly selected tracts. In a letter dated August 1st, he states what he considers suitable, as adapted to the

wants and prejudices of the Irish. Tracts calculated, by plain reasoning, without irritating, to expose error and carry conviction to the heart ; Tillotson's sermon on Transubstantiation, carefully revised and abridged, with a description of the sinner's state and remedy added ; Wesley's "Popery Calmly Considered," with some sharp expressions expunged ; and a short pamphlet on the reading of the Scriptures, supported by quotations from eminent fathers in the Church, would, in the judgment of this veteran evangelist, be very useful.

The missionaries were much cheered to hear good accounts of the permanent results of their labours in different parts of the south and west. Thus a lady from Kerry informed Mr. Ouseley of two who lived in her neighbourhood, and had been converted from Popery, during the visit of the missionaries in 1801, and continued faithful. One was a poor man who bore up against "a flood of persecution ;" and the other a gentleman, who was a recognised member of the Established Church. By a letter from New Ross, it also appeared that some Romanists who had been awakened there, had joined the Society, and were doing well.

Soon after Conference, Graham and Ouseley set out for the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, where their labours were much blessed, particularly in the towns of Wexford and Enniscorthy. Many careless Protestants were changed in heart and life, and acknowledged these devoted men as the instruments, in the hand of God, of bringing them to repentance. In addition to the good which there was reason to believe was done to hundreds, there were three at least who were brought not only from Popery to Protestantism, but to a saving knowledge of the truth. Mr. James Stuart writes, concerning this visit of the missionaries, "When these men come to the fairs, markets, or other places where they preach, the poor Catholics seem to forget that there is a priest in the world. Their fixed attention, deep seriousness, many tears, and hearty terms of approbation, discover at least for a time, that they look upon them as the servants of God who are come to show them the way of salvation. When they hear them, they are fairly put to a stand, their prejudices give way, and the hardest hearts lie open to conviction. I have known instances in which poor Catholics, who had come many miles over the mountains, when they heard these men

preach and publish for a service on the following day, refused to go home, and took lodgings in the place for the night. Some priests are beginning to awake, and tell their people it is no sin to hear the missionaries in the street, provided they do not go for that purpose. Magistrates, officers of the army, and clergymen of the Established Church very often give them a hearing, and would protect them if necessary." *

Messrs. Graham and Ouseley next proceeded to Carlow and Kilkenny, where they met with a very different reception from that on their previous visit. Their labours at the Colliery were attended with Divine power, while prejudice and hostility appeared to yield to the power of truth and love. At Carlow, the word preached, both in the streets and the chapel, was greatly blessed, no less than twenty members being added to the Society. At Kilkenny, where the missionaries had been so cruelly treated two years previously, they were now honoured. The first person who attempted to create a disturbance was at once sent to prison by the Mayor, while the leading clergy and people magnified the grace of God in His servants, and seized the earliest opportunity of passing a vote of thanks to their chief magistrate for his manly and Christian conduct in protecting the evangelists.†

In November, Messrs. Averell and John Joyce paid a visit to Carlow. Mr. Lanktree preached in the street while they addressed as many as could crowd into the chapel; and several persons were led to join the Society. It being proposed that a gallery should be erected, in order to afford additional accommodation for the increasing congregations, and also that the chapel should be repaired, there was a liberal response, and thus these improvements were soon completed. At the December visitation of the classes it was found the membership in the town had increased to eighty-eight; the enlarged chapel was crowded at the quarterly meeting; and several of the new members witnessed a good confession for Christ.

Passing from the provinces to the metropolis, it is worthy of note that during this year, the Methodist Female Orphan School was founded in Dublin. Mr. Solomon Walker, who had been a member of the Society previous to 1777, was a steady friend

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1806, p. 90.

† Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 137-38.

of Methodism to the end of life. He also actively engaged in works of charity and Christian benevolence, visiting the abodes of disease and want, and ministering to the necessities of the afflicted. But that on which he had set his heart was the founding of an asylum for destitute female orphans; and for this he would willingly have abridged his income; but difficulties arose that prevented the accomplishment of his desire during life. He, however, arranged his affairs so that when the Lord called him hence, his benevolent purpose should be carried out. One day, he was out riding with Mr. Robert Hunt, and spoke of how happy he felt in the love of God, his earnest desire to be with Christ, and his fear of dishonouring the Lord in death. While thus speaking, his horse suddenly took fright, and threw the rider, who lifted up his hand, and in a moment passed into eternity. He left the interest of £2,000, to assist in the support of an orphanage, together with some money to provide the necessary furniture, and relied on the zeal and benevolence of the Dublin Methodists to accomplish what he had thus commenced. Such was the origin of the valuable charity, which, during the past eighty years, has maintained and educated nearly two hundred children.

According to the statement of a pious friend, writing to the Rev. B. W. Mathias, at this period, the state of religion in Dublin was lamentably low. He says, "You are aware that Mr. Hartley* leaves Dublin; who his successor may be is unknown, and we can only hope that he may preach the Gospel. Plunket street† is a close church, and the preaching in it is dogmatical declamation in favour of speculative points and forms, instead of upholding the great and essential truths of the Gospel. Swift's alley congregation‡ has split on the essential doctrines of divinity and atonement. The seceders of Mass lane have no meeting-house, and those of Back lane no minister; and, alas! the Gospel in Mary's abbey§ is not that gospel under which vital religion can hope to flourish; it is too often preached as a mixed gospel, and too often prophesieth smooth things; and as to other Dissenting houses, gross error blinds the ministers, and gross darkness the people. And if we turn our view to the Establishment, where shall we find anything of the Gospel, except in the liturgy and prayers of the

* Moravian minister.

† Baptist church.

‡ Lady Huntingdon's Connexion.

§ Presbyterian meeting-house.

Church? Not one to testify the truth as it is in Jesus, save an occasional sermon from any gospel minister who may visit the city, and perchance obtain a pulpit. Is not this a dreadful situation for so populous and wicked a city to be reduced to?" Mr. Mathias in a letter to Mr. Walker, about the same time, says: "I am anxious about the use that shall be made of a place,* that has hitherto been the only house in Dublin connected with the Establishment, in which the Gospel has been statedly preached, and which I should be very sorry to see changed from the plan on which it was originally opened." And when that eminent minister took possession of his charge here soon afterwards, the congregation scarcely amounted to fifty persons.

What a strange and unjustifiable ignoring of Methodism there is in the above! At this period there were in the city several large congregations, including more than eleven hundred members of Society, to whom the Gospel was faithfully and successfully preached by men remarkable for their zeal, intelligence, and piety, and yet not a hint is given of this.

Turning our attention from Dublin to the north, we find that the labours of Messrs. William Hamilton and Bell proved a means of much spiritual blessing. In September and November they visited the Ballyconnell circuit, and preached in the fairs and markets to large audiences, that listened with attention and reverence, many weeping under the word. What was said by Mr. Bell, in Irish especially, made a profound impression on the minds of the Catholic hearers. Mr. M'Arthur says: "From an early period of my life I loved to hear the Gospel; but I was not an advocate for it being preached in the markets and fairs. Since, however, I have heard it proclaimed in these places, and been a witness of the solemnity and reverence of the promiscuous crowds present on these occasions, and have seen the good done, my thoughts have been much changed. Indeed, the visits of the missionaries have been made a blessing to my own soul, and to many of my dear friends on the Ballyconnell circuit."†

In October, these devoted evangelists visited Downpatrick; it being the market day, a vast number of people attended; "And," says Mr. James M'Kee, "if seriousness in such a promiscuous

* The Bethesda.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1806, p. 94.

assembly, and tears demonstrate that the word is attended with success, these effects I myself beheld." The next day, being the Sabbath, the congregations were large, and gave proof of feeling the word to be "quick and powerful."* On Monday, at Castlewellan, there was a numerous audience, most of whom were Romanists, and some appeared much affected. At Killyleagh, a few Protestants were quickened, and thenceforward attended the usual Methodist services. At Drumgiven, the congregation was large, deeply serious, and although dismissed two or three times, continued to stay until Mr. Hamilton sang and prayed out of doors. At Killough, about fifteen hundred persons assembled to hear, many of whom were aroused to deep concern for salvation.

At Kingscourt, the missionaries preached to about five hundred hearers, most of whom were Catholics. A priest who was present requested a magistrate to disperse the crowd; but he declined, saying, "The preachers are not taking any bread from you, and are doing the people good." Soon afterwards a base fellow got on the back of a bull, and rode through the congregation; but was too late to do any harm as the benediction had just been pronounced, and he, falling from his seat, broke his own leg. One person was awakened that day, joined the Society, and was made happy in the love of God. On the following Sabbath, the priest threatened to punish any who listened to the missionaries; but as the people came out from mass, they saw the faithful evangelists preaching in the street, and several waited to hear, notwithstanding the warning they had just received. Thence the missionaries went to Carrickmacross, where several fruitless attempts had been made to introduce Methodism; but now a patient hearing having been obtained in the market, Mr. Hamilton wrote at once to the ministers of the circuit to follow up the work thus begun, which they did. On their second visit they obtained the use of the market-house from the chief magistrate in the locality, who not only attended the services himself but also brought his family. Thus a large congregation was raised, and a good society formed. At Drogheda, the preachers obtained the use of the tholsel, where they preached on Sabbath evenings regularly, to about three hundred hearers, two-thirds of whom were Romanists, who grate-

* *Ibid*, pp. 91-92.

fully appreciated the copies of the Sacred Scriptures with which they were supplied.

But to return to the missionaries. A short time before Christmas, Messrs. Hamilton and Bell visited the Tanderagee circuit. At Richhill, they preached in the market to a large and attentive audience, many of whom were deeply affected, and expressed their earnest desire to hear the servants of God again. Thence they went to a country part of the circuit, where they conducted a service that evening; and next day, being the Sabbath, they preached to large congregations. The word was accompanied with Divine power and "tears flowed from almost every eye." The missionaries remained for about a week in this district of country. Many attended their ministry, especially Romanists, and their message of mercy was received with joy by all classes and creeds.*

Passing from Tanderagee to Dromore, we find that as the accommodation in old Mrs. M'Neill's proved insufficient for the increasing congregations, the preachers waited on Dr. Percy, the bishop of the diocese, and requested the use of the market-house, but were refused. The consent of Conference was then obtained for the erection of a chapel, but as the means necessary were not available, the Society had to be content with two small houses in Meeting street, obtained at a yearly rent of thirty shillings; and out of these a room was constructed in which the services were held for eleven years. At this period a young man named John Ross, a native of Clare, near Lurgan, settled in the town, and having given his heart to God, began at once to hold meetings. He was a most efficient and acceptable leader and local preacher, and for about forty years watched over the Society with parental solicitude and affection, so as to be justly designated "the Father of Methodism in Dromore."

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1806, p. 93.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1805.

At the commencement of 1805, Messrs. Graham and Ouseley were in the west of Ireland, labouring with great success. In Boyle, there were brought to the knowledge of God no less than one hundred persons, including four Romanists, who publicly renounced their connection with Popery. At Sligo, there was a blessed revival, during which a large number of young people were converted; while, as to the work in general, Graham writes:—“Many poor Catholics are beginning to read their Bibles; and some without fear of their clergy. Much prejudice has been removed from the minds of careless sinners, who were enemies to all vital religion, by our preaching abroad, which we have done frequently this winter, and that under frost, hail, and rain. This has tended to fill our chapels with people of every description; and the work of God in the conviction and conversion of sinners, has been carried on. Magistrates and officers of every description have paid more attention this year than before. At present we know not well how to supply half the places that call for us. I have been rather unwell for three years; but, thank God, my health is better at present. Many wonder that we are alive, considering the labours we go through. But the Lord is our strength, and He teaches our hands to war and our fingers to fight.”*

On May 18th, Ouseley writes:—“We have had much preaching in the streets, these five weeks past. This is a fine time to address Roman Catholics; they are still increasing in numbers, and in apparent desire to hear us. I have had a letter from a town I visited, and another from a little village. That from the former states, the Society increased ten or twelve after I left them, six of whom were Romanists. In the latter place, thirty had joined the

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1805, p. 383.

morning I left it, two were Romanists; the letter says there is a great revival, and they are doing well. In another town, Carrick-on-Shannon, twenty-one joined the morning I preached there. Brother Graham was then in Boyle. In short, I can truly say, the Lord was with us in all the towns, streets, and markets, and do hope much good has been done."

The preaching of these faithful men was attended everywhere with like gracious results. In many instances the Romish clergy themselves mixed with the listening multitude, and heard in silent wonder the word of the Lord; and when any of them interposed, as they sometimes did, to excite a lawless rabble against the men of God, and to disperse their congregations, in general their schemes were as impotent as they were wicked, and utterly failed to prevent the people from hearing in their own loved language, the truth as it is in Jesus.

On one occasion, as Ouseley rode from Limerick to Pallaskenry, he arrived at a Roman Catholic chapel, as the congregation came out, and reining up his horse, began to address them, when the priest sallied forth, and, stick in hand, violently dispersed the people, but not before the missionary had announced for a service in the adjoining village. Amongst those present was a young man, named Richard Arter, who, mentally contrasting the conduct of the priest with that of the evangelist, resolved to attend the evening meeting, and hear again for himself. The word preached was accompanied with such light and power, that there and then he renounced all connection with Popery. Soon he was denounced from the altar, and so cruelly persecuted that it was deemed prudent to leave the country. So, having obtained a letter of introduction to Dr. Clarke, he set out for London. His supply of money was so limited that he was obliged to perform the journey through England on foot, and when again and again on the verge of want, the Lord mercifully interposed on his behalf. The doctor received the young convert with great kindness, secured employment for him, and seeing evidence of piety and talents, afforded him opportunities of Christian work, which ended in his being received into the itinerancy. His health, however, soon failed, and he sank into a premature grave.

But to return to Ireland. In the north, Messrs. William Hamilton and James Bell continued their indefatigable labours,

and with considerable success. At Dungannon, they preached one Sunday afternoon in the street, and in the chapel in the evening, with tokens of the Lord's blessing. The day following, at the quarterly meeting, the power of the Lord descended, and numbers cried aloud for mercy. "Such a sight," says Mrs. Ould, "I never saw before." Some found pardon before the meeting closed, and others remained in the house, earnestly seeking until the evening service.* The preachers in Tanderagee write, with regard to a visit paid to their circuit: "It was astonishing indeed to see the crowds which attended the word preached. It is evident God is with the missionaries. Two Protestants have been convinced of sin, by their means; and five Romanists have joined our Society, and evidence their sincerity by renouncing their old sinful practices."†

The leader of the class in Ballymacawley at this time was a farmer, Frank Blair, who had opened his house for religious services, and hospitably entertained the preachers. There was also in the neighbourhood a poor man named Eneas Ball, who although in the enjoyment of religion, had not much brains. He took it into his head that he could preach, and asked Frank for the use of his kitchen, which was at once granted. When it became known that Eny, as he was generally called, was to preach, there was, of course, a great congregation. He arrived about an hour before the appointed time, obtained a white handkerchief, and retired to a private room. Then he issued forth, shaking the handkerchief, took his stand behind a chair, and commenced the service. Having announced his text, and made a few desultory observations, he said that a minister of the Gospel was a mediator. Frank could not stand this, and started on his feet, saying, "You might as well say he was cream of tartar." So poor Eny sat down, and Frank held a lively prayer-meeting, at which good was done.‡

Reference has been made to the controversy between the Rev. Dr. Hales and the Rev. Joseph Benson, in 1803. After an interval of about fifteen months, this discussion was re-opened by the rector of Killashandra, in a very plausible pamphlet,

* The Apostle of Kerry, p. 151.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1846, p. 93.

‡ Lynn's History of Methodism on the Armagh Circuit, pp. 35-36.

entitled, "Methodism Inspected, Part II.," which created a strong feeling against the Society. However the tide soon turned. Not only did Mr. Ouseley write a reply, but Mr. M'Quigg challenged the learned doctor to publicly discuss the points at issue. The rector was simple enough to accept the challenge, and, with his opponent's approval, appointed an umpire. When the evening agreed on arrived, the court-house, Killashandra, was densely crowded, and the interest displayed intense. In the excitement, Dr. Hales either forgot his notes, on which he mainly relied, or was unable to use them, and thus sustained such an ignominious defeat, that his own friends were ashamed of the appearance he made. After this memorable evening, the rector thought discretion the better part of valour, and let the Methodists alone.

By a singular coincidence, two very large, expensive, and beautiful Wesleyan chapels were opened this spring, on the same day, one in the south and the other in the east. At this period the city of Cork had extended considerably, leaving the Marsh somewhat retired and distant from the centre of population. Hence a number of the principal members of the Society having met on January 9th, 1804, with Mr. A. Hamilton, junior, in the chair, it was resolved:— (1) "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the French church, which we now occupy as a place of worship, is by no means suitable to the congregation which attends there; and that it is necessary a new chapel be built somewhere in that neighbourhood to accommodate the very increasing and numerous population of that part of the city." And (2) "That a book be opened immediately, in order to take down subscriptions for that very necessary and laudable undertaking." A committee was then appointed to look out for an eligible site, make needful inquiries, and report within a fortnight. Accordingly on the 23rd, the committee did report, and were directed to close for a most suitable plot in Patrick street. Trustees were then appointed, a building committee nominated, and the plans of Mr. Marks accepted. It is due to the memory of this gentleman to record the unqualified approbation of all who have seen the house, as to both the taste and judgment of its design, and the thorough manner in which it was executed. The new edifice was opened on Sunday, April the 7th; Mr. Steele preached the first sermon, at ten o'clock in the

morning, from the dedication of the temple by Solomon ; and Mr. A. Hamilton, junior, in the evening, discoursed from Acts xxviii. 22. The latter sermon, which is a compendium of the doctrinal teaching of Methodism, was published at the request and expense of the trustees. This beautiful chapel is still most conveniently situated, though numerous changes have passed on the city since its erection, and the excellent order in which it has been kept reflects much credit on the stewards and leaders of the Society.

The Methodists in Dublin had long felt the needs be for additional chapel accommodation on the north side of the city. At length an excellent but expensive site was secured in Great Charles street, on which a large and handsome preaching-house was erected. This chapel was attended by a numerous and respectable congregation, including, it is said, Lady Harberton. In those days females were not accustomed to mount the platform, or take part at public meetings ; but her ladyship had a gift for speaking or rather lecturing, and in school houses often delivered stirring addresses on familiar passages of Scripture. She had a tall, striking figure, with fine eyes, and when roused on a subject, spoke like a prophetess. Of her son, afterwards fifth Viscount Harberton, it is related that he rescued the life of Ouseley, who on one occasion was about to preach in the street of a village in the county of Kildare, when a mob assembled, determined to take his life. The young nobleman, however, who happened to be present, sprang over beside the servant of God, saying to the crowd, " If you stone Mr. Ouseley, you shall stone me too ;" and stood courageously by his side until the service was concluded in safety.

Meanwhile on the Carlow circuit, the work prospered to such an extent that a third preacher was required, and therefore a young man was secured from the list of reserve. An opening was obtained at Castledermot, where the man who received the preachers, on account of his Christian hospitality, had some of his property burned, and also received a threatening notice that if he continued to entertain the Methodists, both he and they would be all destroyed. Nothing daunted, the services were still held, and both preachers and people mercifully preserved from further injury. Five Sabbath schools were opened in different parts of the circuit ; two new chapels were erected, one at

Gurteen, and the other at Garryhill; and on making up the return of members at the close of the year, it was found that one hundred and fifty had been added to the Society, most of whom had been savingly converted.

The Conference met on July the 5th. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. Steele, secretary. Five candidates were received on trial, including Richard Phillips of the Clones circuit, James Olliffe of Bandon, and Michael Burrows.

A resolution passed was to the effect that every preacher should discourage smuggling by purchasing a stamp, when he bought a new hat!

The increase in the membership amounted to three hundred and sixty-seven. As to the progress of the work, it is said in the Address to the British Conference: "We have much reason to bless the name of the Lord; for though our increase has been small, the fields appear white before us and ready for the harvest, so that we are greatly encouraged to look for a large and speedy outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

Eight general missionaries were appointed: Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley to the Dublin and Cork districts; Messrs. Graham and Taylor to the Limerick and Athlone districts; Messrs. Alcorn and Bell to the Belfast and Newry districts; and Messrs. John Hamilton and William Peacock to the Londonderry district and its vicinity.

It was arranged that prayer-meetings should be held in Whitefriar street chapel on the first day of each Conference, from five to six in the morning, and from twelve to one in the afternoon. This is doubtless the origin of what has been long well known as the Conference prayer-meeting.

Sunday school work received a great impetus by a series of resolutions directing each superintendent "to establish a Sunday school in every Society, in town and country, within his circuit, where it is practicable," and stating their object and the manner in which they ought to be constituted.

The Irish mission had evidently risen in popular favour, as is apparent from the increased number of itinerants employed in this work. It was also aided by several Episcopal clergymen. The Rev. George Carr of New Ross, and the Rev. T. Kelly, gave a large number of tracts to the missionaries, which they

distributed, and the Romanists received with eagerness and delight.

Yet, although favoured with the Divine blessing, the work was not carried on without much opposition, and the missionaries were frequently placed in great peril. At Enniscorthy, one day, Ouseley preached, the stone stairs of the market-house being his pulpit, and "gently opened up the errors of Popery," closing with a promise to return, and preach there again on the next market-day. All his gentleness, however, did not avail. Some of his sayings reached the ears of the priests, their ire was aroused, and so strong a feeling excited against him as to make it dangerous to fulfil his intention. When he arrived in the town, the friends sought to dissuade him from the attempt; but his answer was, "Children, what would you have me to do? Is it not my Master's work? Am I not pledged to do it? Would you break my heart by hindering me?" Opposition was then given up; and some of them, with fear and trembling, but with many prayers, accompanied him to the ground. He took his stand, and after a few moments spent in silent prayer, commenced to sing. People began to assemble, who soon became restless and noisy. He then prayed, but as the crowd increased so did its turbulence, and when he attempted to preach missiles began to fly—at first not of a very destructive character, but before long harder materials were thrown—some of which reached him, and inflicted slight wounds. He stopped, and after a pause cried out, "Boys dear, what's the matter with you to-day? Won't you let an old man talk to you a little?" "We don't want to hear a word out of your old head," was the prompt reply from one of the crowd. "But I want to tell you what, I think, you would like to hear." "No, we'll like nothing you can tell us." "How do you know? I want to tell you a story about one you all say you respect and love, the blessed Virgin." "Och! and what do you know about the blessed Virgin?" "More than you think; and I'm sure you'll be pleased with what I have to tell you, if you'll only listen to me." "Come, then," said another voice, "let us hear what he has to say about the holy Mother!" Now there was a lull, and the missionary began in his own homely and graphic way, to tell about the marriage at Cana, showing the result of attending to the advice of the blessed Virgin; and

adding that if she were present with them that day she would give just the same advice: "Whatsoever He saith to you, do it." And then the preacher, having obtained the attention and sympathy of his audience, proceeded to point out and enforce some of the things which Jesus said, winding up each with the Virgin's counsel; and concluded by saying: "With all the love and reverence you pretend for the blessed Virgin, you won't take her advice, but will listen willingly to any drunken school-master that will wheedle you into a public-house, and put mischief and wickedness into your heads." "True for ye, true for ye!" cried one of the crowd. "If you were tellin' lies all the days of your life, it's the truth you're tellin' now."*

Accompanied by his old friend William Hamilton, Ouseley appears to have then proceeded to Newtownbarry, where a woman, attracted by the singing of a hymn to the air of "Tara's Hall," heard him preach, and returning home blamed her mistress for having "informed the preacher on her; for," she declared, "he showed me all that ever I did." Finding, however, that her mistress was innocent, she was convinced that the message had come from God; through a long period of years she adorned the profession of the Gospel, and in extreme old age rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. At Kilkenny, as Hamilton puts it, the missionaries "raised the devil, and the Mayor was brought to lay him," but the mob pelted his worship, and the evangelists had to fly to the chapel for safety.

At Carlow, on a Sunday, Ouseley commenced preaching in the street, which was filled with country labourers, who, with their reaping hooks, had crowded into town to look for employment. Several rushed on the servant of God, determined, it would seem, to destroy him; but a friend, near whose shop he stood, opened the lower half of the door, and pulled him in from the mob. In a short time the military marched from church, when Ouseley recommenced, and preached to an attentive congregation.

In the county of Cavan, the missionaries had much encouragement: crowds attended the services in markets, fairs, and other places, and while the rain and snow descended upon them,

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 161-5.

hundreds stood attentively listening to the preaching of the word. But their thirst for the water of life produced results much more remarkable than persisting to brave the inclemency of the weather. "It is now come to this," writes Ouseley, "that they can calmly, and without the least symptom of displeasure, hear the most profound mysteries of their religion opened up and exposed, when it is done in love and tenderness." In one parish, where the priest had oppressed the people by doubling their dues, they resisted. Even the Bishop failed to quell the spirit of insubordination which arose, and prompted the cry: "O that we had the Black-caps among us!" Many of the Romanists were not afraid to attend the services indoors at night, and some of them were much affected. One man, having heard the missionaries preach in the market, on the impossibility of any creature forgiving sins, brought a Bible and prayer book to prove the Romish doctrine of absolution; but being satisfied concerning this and other errors, he came again in the evening to learn the way of salvation.

Mr. Lanktree was appointed to Longford, where, he says, he had most inconvenient and expensive lodgings, and a small and gloomy chapel, in a retired situation. The circuit included Newtownforbes, St. Johnstown, Granard, Mullingar, Edgeworthstown, Killashee, Keenagh, and various country places, some of which were of considerable importance. The congregations in general were good, and the stopping places comfortable. With the help of a few judicious leaders and local preachers, there were also valuable facilities of usefulness. A number of Sabbath schools were formed, meetings for the religious instruction of children established, Bibles distributed, and social meetings for spiritual edification revived.

In November, Mr. Averell was at work in Ulster. At Belfast, he preached twice on a Sunday, and met the Society with great comfort and encouragement. Next day at the quarterly meeting in Lisburn, there was much of the Divine presence. At Newry the congregations were large and serious. Kingscourt, Kells, Mullingar, and Tullamore were also visited by this indefatigable evangelist, and in each there were tokens of the Lord's blessing in quickening and converting power.

Up to this period Methodism in Antrim had not made much

progress: although there was a society of about thirty persons, most of them were in very humble circumstances. Their leader was a devoted and consistent Christian, named John Getty, who with some of the members used to attend the quarterly meetings in Belfast. The services were held in a schoolroom, belonging to a man named Alexander. Better days, however, now began to dawn in this neighbourhood; and a goodly band of devoted young men and women became identified with the Society. One of the first of these was Mary Mackey, a Unitarian, who happened one day to hear singing, and threw up the window of her room to see where the music came from. It was a Methodist funeral, and the members of Society, as was their custom, sang some of the touching funeral lyrics of Charles Wesley, as the remains of their departed brother were borne to their last resting place. The mind of this young woman was thus impressed with the solemn realities of eternity, and she resolved to go to the Methodist service on the following Sabbath. Soon after this incident, she was married to Mr. William Johnson, but continued to attend the meetings of the Society. At length the town was visited by the missionaries, Messrs. Alcorn and Bell, who preached in the street, and then adjourned to the schoolroom. At this after meeting Mrs. Johnson was made unspeakably happy in the love of Christ. Through the Divine blessing on her faithful testimony and consistent conduct, her sister Martha,* and her brother Alexander,—an exceedingly promising young man,—were led to decide for God. The children and grandchildren† of Mr. and Mrs. William Johnson have rendered most valuable service to the cause of God and Methodism.

Others were now brought into connection with the Society in such numbers as to render the erection of a chapel necessary. The leader and members took up the project most heartily, each one doing his utmost to raise the needed funds. An application to Mr. Robert Scott for a subscription, proved the means not only of calling his attention to Methodism, but of his conversion; and thenceforward, for nearly half a century, he was one of the leading Methodists in Antrim.

While thus the cause prospered in the town, an important

* Afterwards Mrs. M'Lorinan, mother of the Rev. Thomas M'Lorinan.

† Including the Rev. R. Crawford Johnson.

opening for the Society was obtained in the adjoining country at Crosshill, where a Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sinclair had settled. They had been converted through Methodism in Belfast, and joined the Society; and on removing to the country at once invited the preachers to their house. Mrs. Sinclair was no ordinary woman, intelligent, of blameless reputation, and above all deeply pious; she exerted a marvellous influence for good, not only in her own domestic circle, but also throughout the neighbourhood—an influence that is clearly traceable to the present day.

CHAPTER XIX.

1806.

IN the beginning of 1806, Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley were in the county of Cavan. At Belturbet, on one day they held six meetings, preaching in the market-house three times to vast congregations, meeting two classes, and holding a covenant service. On this last occasion the chapel was so full they could hardly get through the people to the pulpit, and at its close thirty joined the Society. At Carrickmacross, a Roman Catholic student ran out, curious to see men preaching on horseback, and the word came with power to his heart, so that he was led to receive the truth. He subsequently became an esteemed minister in the Established Church.* During the following two months, the missionaries had many blessed meetings in Cavan and Fermanagh. In February, there were added to the Society through their labours no less than three hundred persons, including eight Romanists, and "even some Seceders." At Enniskillen, the Catholics came to hear in large numbers, listened with marked attention, and many of them having obtained personal interviews with the evangelists, determined to forsake their evil ways. It was also most cheering to find that the Romanists who had been converted in the first year of the mission continued steadfast, and rejoiced greatly at again meeting the honoured instrument of their salvation. At Brookeborough, the people assembled in a field in crowds, and realized so deeply the Divine presence at the service that they stood up and with great feeling declared, as at a love-feast, what the Lord had done for their souls. Fifteen were added to the Society.†

At Cootehill, after the outdoor service had closed, the

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1826, p. 136.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1806, p. 476.

Romanists so clung to the missionaries that they spoke to them again, nearly as long as if they had preached another sermon, while the hearers drank in every word, and appeared most unwilling to leave. A priest stood at a distance, and said, "Hypocrisy! hypocrisy!" on hearing which a soldier stepped up and asked, "If you have anything against these men, why don't you go and speak it to their face? I dare say they will answer for themselves." So his reverence walked off. A man then came to speak to the missionaries privately, stating that he and his wife had gone to confession the day previously, but the priest would not receive the dues, unless they "added a hank of yarn." He also stated that the wife of a neighbour having died, her husband and he went to the priest to get him "to do the rites of divinity for her," that is, to say five masses for the repose of her soul. The husband not having paid as promptly as the priest thought right, he called out to him in the open congregation, that he would excommunicate him if he did not pay five and fivepence quickly. After the poor fellow, who narrated these circumstances, had received counsel, he went down on his knees, and requested the prayers and blessing of the missionaries. *

In March the evangelists visited the Longford circuit, preaching at Goshen, Mosstown, Granard, Longford, and many other places. A society was formed at Ballinamore, and several additions made to the societies elsewhere. At Granard, an old man gathered a handful of dirt in the street, and threw it over the crowd right into Mr. Ouseley's face. Wiping away the filth, the servant of God exclaimed, "Now, boys, did I deserve that?" "No, no!" was the cry from all sides. In a short time the same scoundrel came again, and attempted a repetition of his dirty deed; but the people fell on him, and gave him a severe chastisement. He therefore lodged information against his assailants, while a counter charge was preferred against him in the name of Mr. Ouseley. The grand jury, however, threw out the fellow's bill, but found that of the missionary; and, although the presiding barrister pronounced street preaching a nuisance, the persecutor was convicted and sent to jail.

A little later the Drogheda circuit was visited, and there were

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, p. 160.

large congregations, including a great many Romanists, who appeared to listen with much attention. Amongst the rest, a special service for beggars was conducted, at which a great multitude of these poor creatures were present. Ouseley selected for his subject the story of Dives and Lazarus, and as he preached there was, he says, such a shower of tears as had not been shed at any other of the meetings. When the service closed, the beggars were requested to pass into the tholsel, and a penny or halfpenny was given to each; but they were seized with a panic, some one having suggested that they were being caught in order to be sent on board a ship in the harbour. "The children began to squall, the men to bustle, and the women to have the heart-beat, all wanting to get out." However they were at last let go, and parted from the servants of God, blessing them.

On the Carlow circuit, the missionaries were joined by Lorenzo Dow, just arrived from America, and Mr. Averell. At the Colliery, there was "a great meeting," to attend which some came seven, ten, and even twenty miles. Mr. Averell and Lorenzo preached, the missionaries exhorted, and souls were saved. At Castlecomer, Hamilton and Ouseley proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation in the street, while Lorenzo occupied the chapel, and about forty were added to the Society. In "savage, ungodly Kilkenny," the evangelists remained three days; the missionaries attacked Popery and wickedness in the street, twice or thrice each day, and the American assailed sin and "A double L partism" in the well filled chapel, which caused no little stir in the city. The mob were disposed to create disturbance, but were deterred by the interposition of the chief magistrate and the presence of the military. The Mayor had a potato flung at his head, and also received an anonymous letter, with a threat to pull down his mansion, if he did not put the evangelists out of the town; but he only laughed at this vain menace. About thirty were added to the Society here. At Bagenalstown, Lorenzo preached under a tree; the word was with power, and about thirty more were received on trial for membership. At the Carlow quarterly meeting, there was "a most glorious time," the chapel was scarcely able to accommodate the members of Society; many hearts were revived, and some made happy in God.

Turning our attention from Hamilton and Ouseley to some of

their brother missionaries, we find that early in the spring, Graham and Taylor were joined at Ballinasloe by Mr. Averell, who remained with them two months; during which they visited nearly every town in Connaught, frequently preaching in two towns on the same day. Besides proclaiming the truth in the open air, they also preached evening and morning within doors, wherever they spent the night. Large congregations, composed chiefly of Romanists, attended the services, and in general listened not only with attention, but in many instances with deep emotion. At Castlebar, the market was so crowded that the evangelists had to take their stand opposite a public house, where a recruiting party put up, who danced, made speeches, and beat their drums with all their might. Yet the people listened with streaming eyes to the messengers of mercy. At Strokestown, however, an officer of the army collected a mob that attacked them with stones, and obliged them to abandon the street.

At Limerick, the missionaries arranged to preach on a Sunday afternoon at the market-house, where, after mass, labourers with their implements of husbandry were wont to congregate. At the appointed time, the servants of God rode up; and the people assembled round them. Graham having sung a hymn and prayed in Irish, preached in the same language, dwelling eloquently on the folly and danger of sin, and the love of God in the gift of Christ. The people in general were attentive, some were bathed in tears, and not a few exclaimed in subdued tones, "It's all true. May God and His blessed mother have mercy on us." Suddenly, however, some one cried out, "Down with the Swaddlers!" which proved the signal for a general uproar. Rotten eggs, old turnips, stones, and other missiles flew in all directions. The missionaries stood their ground bravely, and pleaded with the people to hear them out, but in vain: the tumult only increased. In the midst of this scene of wild confusion and strife, a loud, commanding voice was heard, saying, "Fix bayonets, charge!" and in an instant the mob took to flight. The yeomen had come to the rescue of the evangelists, and soon secured as prisoners several of the most violent of the disturbers of the peace. The missionaries then rode away, having delivered their message of mercy. In the evening the chapel was crowded; and much good was done, not a few being led to decide for the Lord, while the

pious members were quickened to increased devotion to God and His cause.

Mr. Averell, who was with the missionaries in this city, having entered most heartily into Sunday school work, travelled through the four provinces with a view to promote it. Funds being required beyond what Ireland was prepared to furnish, the Sunday School Society in London was applied to, but could not afford help. He then wrote to Joseph Butterworth, Esq., whose name yet lives in many memories as one of the foremost Christian philanthropists of his generation, and he consented to ask the needed aid in England. In a circular issued by him in April, returns are given from twenty-five circuits, out of the forty into which Ireland was divided, giving a total of 204 schools with 12,580 scholars.

One of the schools thus formed during this year was at Maryborough. At a social meeting, in the house of Mrs. Dóxeý, it was proposed that a Sunday school be commenced in the town, to be conducted in the preaching-house, and all the teachers of which should be members of the Society. Accordingly a set of rules were drawn out; Thomas Parnell, Esq., J.P.,* was appointed patron or superintendent, and Mrs. Dóxeý, patroness. Children of all denominations flocked to the school; the teachers were regular in their attendance and zealous in their work. The scholars soon became well informed in religious truth, and many of them—some Roman Catholics amongst others—became wise unto salvation. Several who subsequently became preachers, including Thomas Meredith, as well as other valuable members of the Society, received their earliest religious impressions in this the first Sunday school in Queen's county.

At the spring Assizes in Cork, two soldiers of the 89th regiment were sentenced to death for murder. The case of these unfortunate men being much impressed on the minds of the Society, prayer was made without ceasing on their behalf; they were visited and earnestly exhorted to cry mightily to God to grant them repentance unto life, and faith on our Lord Jesus Christ. While thus addressed, one of the prisoners exclaimed, "I am not afraid to die;" and when asked why, replied, "When you came here

* He was brother of Henry, first Lord Congleton, and thus grand-uncle of C. S. Parnell, Esq., M.P., leader of the Irish Nationalists.

I was trembling under fear of death and judgment ; but now fear is vanished. I believe God will be merciful to me ; and am willing to die that I may deliver my own soul and do justice to my brother." That night when Mr. Andrew Hamilton, junior, accompanied by two clergymen, entered the cell of the condemned men, he found the one who had thus obtained mercy, fervently exhorting his brother to believe on the Lord Jesus, and telling him what God had done for his soul. The Lord's supper was administered, and it proved such a season of spiritual power and blessing as could not soon be forgotten by those present. A special effort having been put forth by the Mayor and leading citizens, one of the culprits obtained a reprieve, which he seemed to regret ; but the sentence of the other remained unrepealed. As, however, the time of execution approached his mind was kept in perfect peace. On the way to the stake, he was greatly blessed ; and, on arriving there, after prayer had been offered, he ascended a few steps of the ladder, gave out the hymn, beginning—

" Come, let us join our friends above,
That have obtained the prize,"

and then addressed the people, expressing his confidence in God, and his deliverance from all fear of death. At his request, " Salvation, O, the joyful sound," was sung as his ransomed spirit was ushered into the presence of God. Thus died a man, who a few days previously had knelt down in the public street, and prayed that the curse of God might rest on his prosecutors ; and thus was fulfilled the gracious assurance of the Saviour, " Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."*

In Belfast, the needs be for a large and suitable chapel was deeply felt, but several obstacles were in the way of its erection. A suitable site was wanting, the funds were not forthcoming, and the friends were not agreed as to the description of house that should be built. At length it was resolved the undertaking should be attempted. Mr. Samson Clarke obtained an excellent site in Donegal square, extending back to Arthur street ; but the plot being larger than was needed the Society would not accept it. Mr. Clarke then conveyed to trustees the required portion, free of rent, retaining the remainder in his own possession. A meeting

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1807, pp. 174-76.

was called, at which £139 was subscribed, and Mr. Ferguson undertook to wait on the leading local merchants and solicit additional subscriptions. This he did, accompanied by a member of the Society; and, though not always successful, they were in general received with courtesy. "I very seldom go to any place of worship," said one gentleman, as he gave a liberal donation, "but I like to assist in building them." In spring 1805, the foundation of the new edifice was laid, and it was opened in May of the following year. It was a substantial building, capable of accommodating eight hundred persons, and proved the scene of many manifestations of Divine power. To remove a debt that remained after it had been completed, Mr. Mayne collected in Dublin and the south between four and five hundred pounds, and Mr. Dinnen in the north and west one hundred, so that the trustees were left in comparatively easy circumstances.*

In Antrim, also, the chapel, to which reference has been made, was erected this year. It was an humble structure, in a lane off Church street, but proved the birthplace of many precious souls. Amongst those added to the Society, soon after a preaching-house was thus opened in the town, was a young man named James Magee, a stonemason, who worked in the neighbourhood of Cookstown, with William and Benjamin Reilly. They were pious and devoted Methodists, with whose Christian consistency he was so deeply impressed that he resolved to seek the religion they enjoyed. The day before his conversion, he used to say, every time he lifted the trowel, it was wet with his tears. No sooner, however, was he enabled to rejoice in the God of his salvation, than he joined the Reillys in work for Christ. Soon afterward the three came to Antrim, and held meetings in the chapel and other places, with much success.

Mrs. William Johnson of this town had a cousin, Jane Mackey, a gay and handsome young woman, whom she tried to win for Christ by inviting to the class; but she declined, until pressed so hard to go, if only once, and see what it was like, that she could refuse no longer. When she appeared in the chapel on the following Sunday morning, the leader was so disconcerted that he thought of holding a prayer-meeting, instead of the usual Christian

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1868, p. 26.

fellowship service. Jane listened with attention, and what she heard was accompanied with such power to her heart that she resolved to return on the following Sabbath. But such was her sense of sinfulness that when the time came, she felt unworthy even to sit with the people of God, and took her position alone on the other side of the pulpit; but there and then resolved, that this people should be her people, and their God, her God. During the following week a ball was held, to which she was invited, and, being passionately fond of dancing, went, and danced with the curate; but with little satisfaction. She felt so condemned as to fear the floor would open, and her soul sink into hell; and vowed if the Lord would only spare her until the end of the quadrille, in which she was engaged, she would go home, and never again join in such worldly amusements. This resolve she faithfully kept, and soon afterward, having thus entered on a new course, obtained peace and joy in believing. Subsequently she was married to James Magee, and her life proved one of remarkably deep and consistent piety.

The Conference met on July 4th. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. Grace, secretary. Six candidates were admitted on trial; amongst whom were William Armstrong of Sidaire, William Keys of Bushhill, John C. Irvine of Enniskillen, Samuel Kyle of Castlederg, and William Copeland of Lisbellaw. There was an increase in the membership of four hundred and fifty-two. In the Address to the British Conference it is stated:—"In many parts of this country, much good has been done through the preaching of the word. A spirit of hearing has been excited in the minds of the people of almost all descriptions; insomuch, that no inconveniences of time or situation could prevent hundreds, in various places, from assembling in the streets to hear the Gospel of Christ. There are encouraging openings, which, if followed up in the spirit attendant on the sacred ministry, will, we doubt not, be productive of the greatest benefit." The missionaries were increased from eight to ten, Messrs. Thomas Kerr and Charles M'Cord being added to their number; and Mr. James Knowlan, of Dublin, was placed at the service of the Missionary Committee, for the West Indies, where he rendered valuable service.

The question of the relation of the Connexion to the Church, which had lain dormant for a number of years, began again to

claim serious attention. Many of the preachers and people, now in the Society, had been brought up Dissenters, and thus had little sympathy with the Establishment; and not a few of the clergy had assumed a position of direct hostility to Methodism, while cases of open persecution were not wanting. Referring to one of these, the Rev. J. Jebb writes at this time to Mr. Knox, expressing a hope that it would not be followed up in other cases, and adding that if it did, he "would seriously apprehend a secession of the whole body." The Conference expresses its judgment in the following minute:—"We have thoroughly examined this subject, and do again, as the public organ of the Methodist Connexion in Ireland, declare that we will not allow any preacher to interfere with the usual canonical hours of the Church in any parish. But we will not give up our Sunday evening preaching, on any consideration whatever, as being the chief time when we are useful to the unawakened. We earnestly recommend all our people to be constant in attending the Church and Sacrament."

Mr. Darragh, who had been on the Clones circuit, was appointed to Limerick; but, on the way to his new appointment, was thrown from his gig, and dislocated his right arm, which ended in mortification. Under the most extreme suffering, he manifested unshaken Christian patience, expressing entire submission to the Divine will. On a friend observing to him that death was fast approaching, he replied, "Blessed be God, it has nothing in it to terrify me;" and in a short time his pure and ransomed spirit passed to the Church above.

During the summer, Mr. George Taylor of Wexford, removed to Dublin, where he opened a high-class school. He also engaged heartily in work for Christ in connection with Methodism. On one occasion, he was appointed to preach at St. John's well, where a patron was about to be held. Knowing the nature of such gatherings, the fanaticism of those who took part in them and their bitter hostility to himself, his heart sank within him; but he dare not shrink from duty. On arriving at his appointment, he found a large and disorderly crowd assembled, and at once mounted a stone, a short distance from the road, and gave out a hymn. Having sung a verse or two, he engaged in prayer, and, lest he should be intimidated by the angry multitude, kept his eyes fast closed. On looking round, he was surprised to find

a large number of soldiers, together with several ladies and gentlemen, among his auditory. It appeared that the crowd was so great as to stop the thoroughfare, and thus compel the travellers to remain until he concluded, and they awed the people into quietness. As the brave local preacher proclaimed the Gospel of the grace of God, many of the hearers wept; and on leaving he was followed by their prayers and blessings.

At this time Mr. Henry Brooke, who had been for about forty years one of the leading Methodists in the metropolis, was in very delicate health, but fast ripening for another and better world. As the end approached he seemed to stand on "Pisgah's top," and exult in the glorious hope of immortality; and on October 6th, his holy and happy spirit was released from the burden of flesh, and entered into the more immediate presence of that Saviour whom he so ardently loved.

From the beginning of July until nearly the end of October, Lorenzo Dow held meetings daily in Dublin, chiefly in a room in Golden lane. They were very largely attended; and about one hundred persons converted, nearly thirty of whom became Methodists. These included Mrs. Cochrane and her daughter Mrs. Hope, who subsequently was married to Mr. Thomas Waugh. Lorenzo being desirous to preach in the chapel, permission was granted by the trustees, and thus he occupied the pulpit both in Whitefriar street and Gravel walk. Serious offence was thus given; for though the eccentric American had numerous friends, there were many who had a strong prejudice against him. Mr. Ouseley, however, rejoiced in hearing of the blessing that rested on the labours of Dow, of whom he speaks as "rude in speech, yet not in knowledge;" and adds that even St. Paul might have been seen ranging through vast countries; poor-looking, and sometimes ragged and starved in appearance; and he doubted whether, if he came to Ireland, and the people did not know who he was, they would receive him, even though they saw the work of God prospering in his hands.

Messrs. Alcorn and Bell were appointed to the Dublin district, and entered with diligence and zeal on their arduous work, proclaiming the Gospel in the fairs and markets throughout Leinster with fidelity and power. At Naas, Mr. Alcorn preached in the street from Matthew ix. 37-8. Amongst his hearers was

the Rev. John J. Harrison, the accomplished and popular minister of the parish, to whose heart the word was accompanied with power, and who was especially affected during the singing of the hymn, beginning,

“From Salem’s gates advancing slow,
What object meets my eyes?
What means this majesty of woe;
Those mingled groans and sighs?”

At the close of the service he came forward to the missionaries, and said, “I am a clergyman of the Established Church; but, alas! though I have been a minister for twenty years, I am one of the idlers described in your sermon.” He then invited them to his house, where they found Mrs. Harrison and a number of friends playing cards; but the game at once ceased, and Mr. Alcorn was requested to sing the hymn which had so deeply affected Mr. Harrison. Every face was soon suffused with tears, and while the servant of God engaged in prayer, Mr. Harrison was enabled to lay hold on Christ as his Saviour. Thenceforward, he adorned the Christian profession, so that not only his family but his people were greatly blessed through his godly testimony and consistent life. His career, however, was brief; for about two years and a half subsequently he caught fever, in visiting one of his parishioners, and in a few weeks died in the full triumph of faith.

But to turn our attention to the labours of some of the other missionaries. Messrs. Graham and Taylor were appointed to the Cork district; and the work of the Lord was greatly revived in the different places they visited. Many were added to the societies, numerous backsliders reclaimed, and a considerable number savingly converted. Old prejudices also were removed, and a spirit of inquiry extensively excited. At Milltown, a yeoman who joined with others in throwing stones, was deprived of his arms, and drummed out of the corps. At Tralee, where a new chapel was nearly finished, a promising society was formed. At Castleisland, the service was held in the barrack, during which a lady, who had previously been reprovved for her levity, and a military officer were brought into great spiritual distress. At Aghadown, a considerable number were converted, and the Society much increased. At Bandon also, similar results were witnessed;

amongst the converts being at least one Romanist. Here, the influence of the priests, which was unusually powerful, prevented the people in general from attending the services of the evangelists, who were represented as false prophets and deceivers. Nevertheless, on their return to the town, they had a blessed season out of doors; and the chapel could not contain the congregation in the evening. The priests thereupon became alarmed, and one of them publicly intimated that the next time the itinerants "came to the street," he would go, and, by his arguments, silence them. The missionaries therefore at once announced for a service, and a vast crowd assembled to hear the discussion, but no priest appeared; so the word was preached without let or hindrance, and from that time opposition appeared to cease.*

Soon after Conference, Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley set out for Connaught, where they laboured, especially in the counties of Sligo and Mayo, with glorious success. A revival had just commenced in the town of Sligo, and into this blessed work the missionaries entered with characteristic zeal, preaching in the streets, and holding field-meetings. One of the latter held at Drum, on August 17th,—long spoken of as "the memorable 17th,"—is noteworthy. About one thousand persons were present; the Spirit of God descended in mighty energy; large numbers literally fell prostrate on the ground, smitten by an invisible power, and soon many arose here and there,—their countenances radiant with celestial joy—to declare what the Lord had done for their souls. About a month later, Ouseley writes from this town: "As to the work among us, since I wrote you last, I do not know rightly how I could describe it. The whole country round seems to be moved. Only eternity will tell what the Lord has done here lately."† At one of the field-meetings, heavy rain came on, but the people were so anxious about their souls that they regarded it not; and when the missionaries were obliged to leave, the Rev. Mr. Caldwell, remained for hours praying with the penitents, and directing them to their Saviour. The succeeding love-feast is described by Ouseley, as one of the

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1807, pp. 383 and 525.

† Lanktree's Narrative, p. 165.

most glorious he ever attended. After about an hour had been spent in Christian fellowship, "the whole house, crowded as it was from end to end, broke out into one burst of praise and prayer." During the course of two months, upwards of two hundred persons were at least awakened to serious concern, and joined the Society.

In September, the missionaries travelled westward, through the barony of Tireragh, a track of country thickly inhabited by Romanists, with a comparatively small number of Protestants scattered among them, and these, with few exceptions, in wretched circumstances, both socially and morally. Many of them had so far departed from the faith, that it was not uncommon for them, at the approach of death, to send for the priest. To add to the difficulties and perils of the evangelists, the district was invested by lawless mobs, called Threshers, who at night committed numerous depredations, and thus filled the minds of the peaceable inhabitants, with terror. In the midst of these alarms, God took special care of His servants; who, nothing daunted, both publicly and privately, preached the Gospel of the grace of God, and witnessed the glorious effects of their ministrations. Soon this moral wilderness blossomed as the rose, and the place of dragons became as the garden of the Lord. An entire new circuit was formed, consisting of upwards of three hundred members, including from twenty to thirty converted Romanists, three of whom were active and devoted leaders, who could read and write the Irish language.

Mr. Ouseley relates that as he came over the mountains, he was told by one family, at whose house he had preached, they were afraid of the Threshers, and therefore the preachers could not be received any more; but next morning, when the people came together, four or five houses were open to receive the servants of God. Thence, he went to another place and collected the people, who wept vehemently, and as he arranged places where the preachers could stay, one Roman Catholic cried out: "Come, sir, two days in the week to my house, and welcome indeed." Next we find the missionaries preaching to the Threshers, who gave them "thousands of blessings." They also got the young people and children to commit the Holy Scriptures to memory. In a place where ten or twelve Romanists had joined the Society,

the priest, a great drunkard, threatened to curse them, to make the hair fall off their heads, and when they were dying, to refuse them "the seal of Christ." But when Ouseley came round and visited their cabins, the poor things sprang towards him, with eyes dancing with joy and affection. As he preached, "Oh, the priest, the priest!" cried one in Irish, "why is he hindering us from all this comfort and sweetness?" The next morning, a large barn was filled, and it seemed like heaven upon earth. One after another cried aloud for mercy, and found peace with God. As they were about in equal numbers, Protestants and Catholics, it was said, "God is giving us one about of each sort."

Of one of these converts, named Rogers, a strange story is recorded. During the night on which he sought salvation, his family being asleep, he continued for an hour or two in an agony of prayer. While thus engaged, with his face to the ground, he saw a light suddenly shining, and, fearing the house had taken fire, rose up to see where; but to his astonishment two persons were before him, one like the Saviour nailed to the Cross, with a crown of thorns on His head. The other said: "Be not afraid; we are not bad spirits, but good: my name is Peter; I am come with the Lord. Only pray on, and no harm will happen to you. Go to priest Gilboy, and tell him to quit his drinking whisky, and to preach to the people. The priests are destroying, and not doing by their people as they ought." Rogers inquired: "Is it not fitter for some of his own flock to warn him than me?" The apparition replied: "You will have to go yourself." "But," said the poor fellow, "he will not believe me." Then answered the other: "Go, and I will give you a token that he will know, and he will believe you. Tell him that he was lately in a passion, pursuing a person who had vexed him; and when passing over a bridge, his horse stumbled and threw him over the battlement; but the Lord pitied and saved him that he might repent." In an instant all vanished. Rogers accordingly warned the priest, who did not attempt to deny the token, and consented to preach the sermon, but said he would die if he quit the whisky, and hoped St. Peter would not be angry if he took a little. Some of the Catholics declared, it could not have been St. Peter, but an evil spirit, for he came to a Protestant and not one of them-

selves; and others said: "Be that as it may, we have got one good sermon by it at any rate."

Messrs. Thomas Kerr and Charles M'Cord were appointed to labour in the Belfast and Newry districts. Having met, in the middle of August, they proceeded to Larne, where they preached on horseback; and also published for an evening service in the chapel, which was filled. Here they were informed of a townland, called Ballyfore, which was five miles from a place of worship, and at once arranged to preach there. A congregation of about one hundred and fifty assembled, and heard the word with joy; two of those present invited the itinerants to their houses; and thus in a short time two classes were formed, and five brethren raised up to conduct or assist at meetings. About two miles from this another society was formed; as well as one at Straid, where five more prayer leaders were appointed.*

Early in November, Mr. Averell left home on a tour to the north. From Mullingar, where he had opened a new chapel, he was accompanied by Mr. Kidd, "who was so much taken up in the contemplation of the way to heaven," that he led him several miles out of his road on earth; "but the sweet savour of his godly spirit made more than amends for the circuitous ride." At Oldcastle, Mr. Averell preached three times, and assisted in organizing a promising Sunday school. At Granard, there were but few to hear, and some of these seemed to think it an act of condescension to associate in the worship of God with persons in humbler circumstances; but at Kilmore, on a short notice, there was a large congregation. Thence, accompanied by Mr. Robert Creighton, he proceeded to Clones, where he addressed unusually numerous audiences, and also formed a Sunday school. At Monaghan, there was the best organized institution of this kind he had met with in Ireland. It consisted of about three hundred scholars, and a good staff of teachers, who devoted Wednesday evenings to teaching writing and arithmetic to those who had no other opportunity of learning. The schools on the Tanderagee circuit were also in a most prosperous state, the attendance of children being large, while their cleanly appearance, orderly conduct, and progress in learning were most marked. At Belfast, there was a large

congregation in the new chapel, and manifest tokens of spiritual prosperity; while at a love-feast the Divine presence was still more signally displayed, the members spoke freely, and the Lord made it a time of general blessing. Thence, accompanied by Mr. Barber, he visited Dromore, and preached in the Presbyterian meeting-house to a large audience. At Banbridge, a love-feast was held, which was greatly acknowledged of God. Here also Mr. Averell notices a curious coincidence in names, being entertained by a Mr. Wisdom and his wife Grace, and also by a Mr. Love and his wife Prudence. At Newry, the word was accompanied with much power to the hearts of a numerous audience; but at Dundalk, there was a large house, a small congregation, and little prospect of good. At Drogheda, there was much life in the Society, and a spirit of hearing amongst the people in general. On Christmas eve, the indefatigable evangelist arrived in Dublin, where he remained until after the close of the year, rejoicing in the manifest tokens of spiritual prosperity in the Society, as the ministry of the word was numerously attended; and the Lord almost daily added to the number of His people.

CHAPTER XX.

1807.

ON January 1st, 1807, the annual breakfast-meeting was held in Dublin, and it proved the occasion of much hallowed enjoyment. It appeared that the Society had realized considerable prosperity, the ministry of the word being numerously attended, additions made almost daily to the number of true believers, and the funds well sustained. The subsequent annual appeal on behalf of the Widow's Alms House was made by Mr. Lanktree, who preached to a noble congregation, consisting of the Lord Mayor, sheriffs, aldermen, members of Parliament, ministers of various denominations, and a large number of persons of wealth and influence. The collection amounted to £196.

Early in January, Mr. Averell left Dublin on one of his evangelistic tours. At Celbridge, having been most cordially received by an English company, who had opened a large woollen factory, he preached twice in the barrack to considerable congregations. At Naas, he received much kind attention from the Rev. Mr. Harrison. At Baltinglass, where he was entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Winnett, who had a short time previously realized the saving power of Divine grace, he found the fields more than white unto harvest; a revival, which had commenced through the labours of the missionaries, being in progress. Large numbers attended the ministry of the word, many of whom were in all the ardour of first love. At Hacketstown, where also several had been awakened and converted through the missionaries, Mr. Averell preached four times, met the classes, and held a covenant service. He says, he never spent a happier Sabbath nor witnessed, in the course of one day, so many gracious manifestations of the power and love of God as he did here. At Tinahely, he was warmly received by Mr. and Mrs. Barker, in whose house

was held the service, which was well attended. At Killaveny, he preached to a numerous audience, and also spent a happy time with Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert, who had been long the chief support of Methodism in the place. At Coolboy, many were pricked in their heart, and cried aloud for mercy. Of these, eighteen were formed into a class, amongst whom was a young lady, who about an hour previously had expressed her determination not to give up the world and its pleasures, but was one of the first brought under conviction of sin. At Coolkenna, the evangelist had a good time, and also enjoyed the hospitality of honest John Dooling and his wife. At Tullow, "a very benighted place," there were large and attentive congregations.

At the latter end of February, Mr. Averell set out on another tour, accompanied by the Rev. H. Caulfield, with whom he stopped several days, and preached to his parishioners at Kilmanagh. At Carrick-on-Suir, almost all the Protestant inhabitants attended the service, and the word was accompanied with great power. The evangelist found the Society in Cork much alive to God; he preached frequently in the new chapel, and had the satisfaction of seeing fruit to his labours. At Bandon, he had unusual liberty in addressing a large audience; and in the market-house, Clonakilty, a crowd of people assembled. At Rosscarbery, he was kindly received by the Rev. George Armstrong, and with a small congregation, in the chapter-room of the cathedral, enjoyed much of the Divine presence. At Ardraly, there was the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit he had witnessed in the course of this tour. At Aghadown, he preached twice in an unfinished chapel, to very large audiences, including most of the neighbouring gentry. At Ballydehob, where he rejoiced to find the Swantons full of life and zeal, there was a numerous congregation, amongst whom were many who had been brought to the Lord during the revival in 1800. In the midst of these labours, the health of the servant of God gave way, so that he was obliged to return home.

Meanwhile Lorenzo Dow, having received from Mr. Averell a travelling plan and letter of recommendation, started for the provinces, passing through almost every part of Ireland, drawing large congregations, and addressing them with characteristic earnestness, power, and success. He says he travelled about seventeen hundred miles, and held about two hundred meetings,

in most of which the quickening power of God was felt, and souls were set at liberty.

In several instances the visit of the eccentric American was succeeded by a gracious revival, as at Downpatrick, which was followed up by the labours of the missionaries. In this town, many were brought to the knowledge of the truth, amongst whom were some Romanists, who witnessed a good confession, and were faithful to death. The Society in the town was more than doubled; and the revival extended to the surrounding country, especially to the parish of Inch, where the zealous labours of a devoted tradesman, named William Casement, were much owned of the Lord. Having fitted up a vacant shop, as a place of meeting, services were held regularly, and a large class soon formed. Thus the good work deepened and spread. Amongst those who attended the services in Downpatrick was William Smyth, a lad who was at once taken up by the Society, and, on Dr. Coke's visiting the town, invited to meet him. The worthy doctor took William by the hand, prayed that God might bless him, and added, "The Lord must have the service of your life." The prayer was answered, as for more than half a century that life was unreservedly consecrated to God.

During Lorenzo Dow's visit to the north, he was accompanied by Edward Addy, who in some measure caught the spirit of his zealous friend, and began, in the county of Armagh, to hold meetings himself, which were made a great blessing. At Drumcree, where there was a small class, and also a public house, as well as a dancing school, Mr. Addy obtained access to most of the Protestant families on the townland, and conducted services with such effect that in three months the dancing school was closed, the public house deserted, and the Society increased from nine to thirty-six members. Thence the work spread to Derryneskan, where such an extensive awakening took place, that no house could contain the people, who thronged to hear the word preached, and the services were therefore held out of doors. Next, Drumnevan was visited, and here a good work was done. Amongst others John Hagan was revived. He had been in the itinerancy for one year, but owing to his youth and the discouragements he had met, withdrew from his circuit. Now he joined Addy, entered heartily into work

for Christ, and the Lord greatly acknowledged their united efforts.*

In the west, Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley continued their zealous and self-denying labours, which were much owned of the Lord. Early in the year, the latter writes:—"Last week, one or two old men, after a mighty struggle, found the pearl of great price, and a young girl in another village; and so clear is their testimony, and so bold, that others are alarmed. Six or seven more obtained mercy on Saturday, and many more are on the stretch for God's salvation. Ten Romanists have joined us in one village, and others that stand at a distance are drawing near in spite of the priests, who are greatly enraged. I preached a sermon on 'Thou art Peter,' etc. The Lord made it to shake the foundations of many. We have two fine fellows, that lay buried in these villages, now all on fire, and helping us most valiantly. One of them was a Romanist, is very expert at Irish, and was catechist for the priest. God is greatly acknowledging their labours, and some more are beginning to break forth in prayer."† Soon a third was raised up of a similar spirit, who exhorted and prayed with great fervour in both Irish and English. Scarcely a day elapsed that souls were not brought to the Redeemer. At one village, where were converted twelve persons, including four Romanists, the priest fought hard to retain the people, threatening, cursing, and inflicting penances, but all in vain. Men, women, and children flocked to hear the missionaries, and hung on their words with sad and prayerful interest. His reverence therefore came, and called out one of the women: "Polly," said he, "so you have gone to hear the preacher again. I will cut you off; I will drive you from my flock; I will excommunicate you; and John Willis, and Thady Towhy, and John, and all of you, so I will." "Well, sir," answered Polly, "so you can, to be sure; but I hope you cannot drive us from God." The priest walked off, confounded, and next day sent his man to collect corn from them; but they all refused, and would not give him a grain. At class meeting here, one little girl having given her heart to Jesus, said, "If you felt what I feel, if you would but get the love of God,

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, pp. 345-46.

† Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 172-73.

you would never again be afraid of the priest." New openings continued to present themselves; and even some persons of influence invited the missionaries to their houses, and gave

channels. A spirit of inquiry

Special offering for Hospital Work.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1807, p. 68.

for Christ, and the Lord greatly acknowledged their united efforts.*

In the west, Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley continued their zealous and self-denying labours which were much owned

you would never again be afraid of the priest." New openings continued to present themselves; and even some persons of influence invited the missionaries to their houses, and gave generous help in the erection of new chapels. A spirit of inquiry was created, and a growing interest excited in the truth as it is in Jesus.

The numerous converts from Popery were much in need of religious instruction, and the Lord in His gracious providence, raised up a most valuable auxiliary in the Hibernian Bible Society,* that supplied the missionaries with copies of the Sacred Scriptures, which were eagerly bought by both Romanists and Protestants. Hamilton and Ouseley scattered about six hundred; of these, the Catholics bought or were given between one and two hundred, which in some instances they compared with the Douay version. It was no small tribute to the fidelity and success of the itinerants, in following up serious impressions with suitable religious instruction, that the majority of those appointed as teachers to the parochial and provincial schools, were members of the Society, who were chosen, not because they were Methodists, but because their answers were the most satisfactory, and their testimonies the highest. A rector in Dublin, who was a member of the Committee of management, had the candour to acknowledge that none of the other candidates, who appeared before the board, were equal to the Methodists.†

Let us now glance at the labours of the other missionaries. The first time Messrs. Graham and Taylor visited the city of Cork, they had "a blessed opportunity of preaching out of doors," which they had reason to believe would not soon be forgotten. On their next visit, the audience was still larger, and although some stones were thrown, no injury was done, and thousands listened with attention to the message of mercy. Some persons of influence in the city were thus brought into connection with Methodism. On the third occasion, it was estimated that six thousand people were present, many of whom found the word preached the power of God unto salvation. At Youghal, most

* This was formed in 1806, at which time it is stated, that with the exception of the metropolis, there were not twelve towns in Ireland, in which Bibles and Testaments were sold.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1807, p. 89.

of the members of the Hanoverian or Friendly Brothers' Society attended the service; the missionaries were treated with much courtesy by the Mayor and leading inhabitants; and so favourable was the impression made that the chapel could not accommodate those who desired to attend its regular services. The Society was much increased, and not a few were converted, including at least two Romanists. At Fermoy, services were held in the street, and in a large room over the bridewell, granted for the purpose; and thus many prejudices against the Society were removed. At Mallow, great crowds attended the open-air meetings, several additions were made to the Society, and the work generally was much revived. "Upon the whole," says Taylor, "I am persuaded light and knowledge have increased in all the places we have visited, among both Romanists and Protestants. And of the latter, those who were our enemies, are in many instances now become our friends, and I should have the same to say of the former, were it not for the priests."*

In the Dublin district, Messrs. Alcorn and Bell succeeded in finding openings in thirteen or fourteen towns, where were many willing to receive both the Gospel and its ministers. A complete new circuit was thus formed, consisting of a number of places visited once each fortnight. Many of the Romanists read the Scriptures, and were determined to hear them preached, notwithstanding much opposition. Great respect and kindness were shown to the missionaries by the military, who frequently provided in the barracks accommodation for the services, and many of whom were brought to repentance. At Donard, where a detachment of the Wexford militia was quartered, the officers were not very favourable at first, but became friendly, when they found that most of their men, who were Catholics, attended the meetings. Here was formed a society of twenty-four, several of whom had been Romanists, including one who took charge of the meetings, in the absence of the preachers. At another new place, there were fifteen members, two of whom were converted Catholics, and also a Sunday school with fifty scholars, most of whom were Romanists. In all seven new classes, consisting of one hundred members, were formed.†

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1807, pp. 527 and 572.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1808, pp. 189-91.

Messrs. Thomas Kerr and M'Cord, who were on the north-east mission, travelled about two hundred miles each three weeks, and gave away, especially to Romanists, numerous copies of the Scriptures, which were gratefully appreciated. They also formed a number of new classes, and would have commenced others, but for lack of suitable leaders. At times the missionaries were pressed to accept money, but declined, and explained to their generous hearers the economy of Methodism.*

One Sunday afternoon a terrible storm, accompanied with thunder and lightning, raged in this district of country, and a house was struck, so as to become almost a heap of ruins, while the inmates narrowly escaped with life. A large crowd having assembled to see the effects of the tempest, David M'Curdy and Neal Horan, felt their spirit stirred up to improve the opportunity, which they did most effectually, exhorting the people to repent and believe the Gospel. The word spoken was accompanied with Divine power, and a gracious work of awakening commenced, which extended and continued for years, until at length, at Billy, a preaching-house had to be erected for those brought into connection with the Society.†

Messrs. John Hamilton and Peacock, the missionaries appointed to the Londonderry district, had to endure numerous privations, from damp beds, long rides, and poor fare, yet were cheered with no little success. Notwithstanding the opposition of the enemies of the truth, the out-door services especially were much blessed to the people. At one meeting, which lasted several hours, between twenty and thirty were brought to the saving knowledge of God. The prejudices of many were much blunted, if not completely removed. Large numbers of the Romanists could not refrain from weeping as they heard of the love of Jesus. The missionaries rode several hundred miles, through Inishowen, preached to thousands of people, and had reason to believe God had crowned their labour with success: ten Societies were formed, eighteen stopping places opened, and about eighty souls converted. The copies of the Scriptures distributed proved the means of much good to Catholics, as well as Protestants. Some of the former were thus enabled to state such objections to

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1807, p. 617.

† Lanktree's Narrative, p. 235.

the Romish creed as the priest was unable to answer. Amongst others, a Catholic schoolmaster was converted, and laboured much for the salvation of those with whom he had been in communion. He suffered greatly from the priest, who did all in his power to bring him back to the Church of Rome, but in vain; so after the most dreadful anathemas had been pronounced on him, he was given up as lost. The missionaries preached in his house to large congregations of Romanists. On one occasion especially, the Lord seemed to shake the place, the whole audience being deeply affected. At the close of a protracted field-meeting at Newtownstewart, about one hundred anxious inquirers retired to the adjoining chapel.*

At this period there was in Londonderry a Young Men's Christian Association, probably the earliest institution of the kind formed in Ireland. Its object was to encourage young men who had joined the Methodist Society, by promoting their moral and spiritual welfare, and assigning them spheres of Christian usefulness. Some were employed as tract distributors, and others appointed to conduct cottage prayer-meetings in the city and its suburbs, which prepared them for more important work for Christ. Of the members of this valuable Association, at least the following subsequently gave themselves to the work of the ministry: James Lynch, a converted Romanist, Samuel Downing, Robert Bruce, Archibald M'Loughlin, and Robert Masaroon.†

Dr. Coke, with his excellent partner, made a tour through Ireland this year, and returned to Dublin to preside at the Conference which met on July 2nd. Mr. Tobias was elected secretary. Mr. Ouseley was received into full connexion. James Knowlan of Dublin, had been sent out as a missionary to the West Indies during the year, and King Barton of Newtownstewart called into the itinerancy in Ireland. The following five candidates were admitted on trial:—Samuel Harper of Drumlarney, William Ellis of Lurgan, John Wiggins of Redhill, Charles M'Cormick, and John Toland; three of whom were placed at the service of the Missionary Committee, Wiggins and Toland being sent to the West Indies, and Ellis to Newfoundland. There was one death, in addition to that of Mr. Darragh already noticed, William Robert-

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1807, pp. 615-16.

† *Irish Evangelist*, 1871, p. 53.

son, a young man of good understanding and sound judgment, amongst whose last words were "There is a blessed reality in religion. Oh the inexpressible sweetness I find in Christ! Tell my friends I am going to heaven."

An increase in the membership of seven hundred and eighty-nine is thus referred to in writing to the British Conference:—"In our former Address, we declared our expectation that we should be blest this year with a more powerful visitation from the Spirit of the Lord, and, thanks be to God, we have not been disappointed. On various circuits there has been an ingathering, and what we think of far more importance, many have been turned to the Lord. In speaking of the prosperity of Zion, we should not pass over in silence our beloved missionaries, whose labours the Lord remarkably owns. A considerable number, through their instrumentality, have been brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and many classes have been formed by them, distinct from our regular circuits."

The number of missionaries remained the same, but Messrs. Graham, M'Cord, and Peacock resumed the ordinary itinerancy, and their places were supplied by Messrs. Olliffe, James Rutledge, and Thomas Johnson. A resolution was passed, disowning all responsibility with regard to Mr. Dow, and enjoining that if he should return to the country, the preaching-houses should not be opened to him on any account. Poor Lorenzo! His self-denying and devoted labours were but little appreciated by some who ought to have esteemed them more highly.

Mr. Knox, being in Dublin during the sittings of the Conference, was present at "five Methodist symposiums," and evidently much pleased with what he saw and heard, as the preachers appeared "not more, perhaps less disposed to fall out with the Established Church"—in truth they had less provocation. Dr. Coke, whom he never expected to make think as he did himself, seemed to him "very reasonable and proper;" and even Mr. Ouseley was much more open to reason than he had expected.

At this period a man named Tommy Stewart, who lived on the slopes of Knocklayd, went to a prayer-meeting conducted by two of the leaders. He sat and stood and knelt as the service proceeded, listened and wondered, but his wonder reached its

height when he heard these men, his own neighbours, pray as they did, and without a book! He continued to attend the meetings, and by-and-by made out that they held another kind of service on Sunday mornings; he heard it was called class-meeting, and began to inquire how they got on there. Having asked a member, he was told to come and see for himself. "But will they let me in?" said he. "I'll engage you they will," was the reply; and so encouraged he determined to go, and, on the following Sabbath went. As he walked to the place of meeting, he began to question himself thus: "Whare am I gawin' ony way? an' what am I gawin' to dae! whatna fule's erran' am I gawin' on this Sabbath morn?" But as he talked, he walked, and soon, so questioning with himself, arrived at the place of meeting. He was welcomed, and had not sat long, listening attentively to the plainly expressed statements of religious experience made by the members, and the warm exhortations and honest counsels of the leader, until, to use his own words, he "felt somethin' movin' in his breest;" and when the leader addressing him said, "Well, Tommy, in what state is your soul to-day?" "'Deed," said he, "in a vera sinfu' state;" and straightway, bursting into tears, began crying to God for mercy. For three weeks he continued in such deep concern for his soul, that he could scarcely think of anything else. Then the Lord revealed His mercy to him; his joy was unbounded, and for a considerable time he realized a blessed experience. He was in the habit of rising every night at about one o'clock, and spending an hour in happy intercourse with his Lord. One Saturday night, however, which preceded a Christmas love-feast at Ballycastle, he had been thinking of going there, but the severity of the weather and the length and badness of the road caused him to determine not to go. He awoke as usual, and looked for his happy hour, but "the candle of the Lord" did not lighten his darkness that night. His joy was gone; he had no liberty; all was hard and dark within. He began to ask himself, "What is the reason of it ony way?" And while he lay puzzling over the matter, it suddenly occurred to him, that he had been reasoning with flesh and blood, and therefore resolved at once to go to the love-feast, but did not recover his happiness. In the morning he went to class, told the whole story of his reasoning with flesh and blood, and its conse-

quences, and tried to get some of the members to accompany him to Ballycastle; but all having refused, one of them at length said, "I b'lieve Tommy, I'll gang wi' ye tae the quarterly meeting." Gladly was this offer seized, but before the journey was completed, what with snow and mud, the pedestrians were very wet, and most uncomfortable in body as well as mind. Tommy got little good of the sermon, and the love-feast that followed was not much better. During a pause in the speaking, the preacher asked if Tommy Stewart was present, and when informed he was, said, "I want him to tell us what he told in class this morning." This, as Tommy said afterward, cast a great damp upon him, and he was damp enough already; but he stood up and told his story as he had told it in the morning; his hearers listened with brotherly sympathy, some weeping, others praying audibly; and then the preacher said, "Tommy, you have lost your first love; 'tis a great loss, and there is only one way to recover it; the Lord's way, 'repent and do the first works.'" "I did repent," as Tommy said in many a love-feast subsequently, "and I did recover it, and I have never lost it."*

Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley were appointed to the counties of Sligo, Mayo, and Galway,—ground on which they were not strangers. The population was thin, the Protestants few, and the towns lay far apart. Many of the stopping places were most uncomfortable. The little kitchen, with a damp earthen floor, over which the steps had to be carefully chosen, was frequently, at once, the cow-house, preaching place, dining room, and sleeping apartment. "Often at night," says Hamilton, "the dog would come through a hole in the wall, and lie down beyond me, and madam sow with her family under the bed." But the blessing of God was with the missionaries; and the number of souls converted more than compensated for all the privations endured. Such was the success of these devoted servants of God, that the Romish Bishop and priests took alarm, called a special meeting to consider what had best be done, and resolved to give no quarter to the Black-caps. On the following Sabbath, they were denounced from every altar in the diocese, and the most terrible curses pronounced on those who listened to them. Not

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1877, p. 183.

satisfied, however, with mere words, many of the poor people who had thus incurred the displeasure of their clergy, were compelled to proceed bare-headed and bare-footed through the streets to the Catholic chapels, and there to walk on their knees before the congregation. One priest took an oath publicly on the Bible that no Protestant could ever enter the kingdom of heaven, and that the Protestant Testament was a false one. Another swore by the hand of God, that the Methodists were false prophets, and imprecated most earnestly that his seven curses might alight on any one that heard them. A third declared that whoever would listen to Ouseley would be bound to the devil in the flames of hell for ever. While a fourth of these ecclesiastics, fresh from Maynooth, rushed into the midst of one of Ouseley's congregations crying out, "O Catholics! O Catholics! why are you listening to this devil? Follow me!" Mr. Ouseley published a series of letters to Dr. Bellew, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ardnaree, as the ancient portion of Ballina is called, prompted by the violence to which he and his fellow-labourers, as well as their converts were subject. He evidently considered that the influence exerted by his lordship was rather a stimulating than a moderating one; for he says plainly, after alleging many acts of persecution, that they were mainly due to the Bishop.

Yet the good work prospered, and some most atrocious sinners were brought to the feet of their Redeemer. One instance was that of a sergeant-major in the Waterford militia, whose blasphemies had been "enough to make the streets tremble." Another was a superannuated officer, "a fine-looking man, upwards of six feet high," but blind, and a proverb for wickedness. Having gone to one of the services to amuse himself, as he called it, he returned saying, "Who can bear these fellows! They speak too hard." Yet he went again and again until at length the Lord had mercy on him.

Messrs. Bell and Taylor were appointed to the Cork district, where they laboured with fidelity and success. At Skibbereen, large numbers of Catholics and Protestants attended the open-air services, although some stones were thrown, until soldiers came forward and restrained the violence of the mob. At Bantry, where the sacredness of the Lord's day was openly disregarded, there was a congregation of not less than fifteen hundred, most

of whom were Romanists. And at Crookhaven, "a very ungodly place," Messrs. Bell and Hadden were publicly attacked by the resident clergyman, who also ordered his servant to blow a bugle until the evangelists were out of the town. Many of the inhabitants, however, were much grieved to see the servants of God thus treated.

One Sabbath, Mr. Bell made his way into the town of Kilworth, and entering the church, requested to be shown to the pew of a lady, whom he had heard was religiously disposed. At the close of the service, having introduced himself to her as a Methodist missionary, he requested she would have the kindness to get her servant to bring him a chair, as he was about to preach in the open air. "Lord bless me!" said she inaudibly. "Is it not enough for this gentleman to bring the eyes of the congregation upon me; does he want to make me a spectacle to the whole town?" Then the words of the Lord Jesus rushed into her mind; "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels;" and she answered: "Not only my servant, but if requisite myself." Mr. Bell, having mounted the chair, Mrs. Carey stood by his side, and he commenced singing a hymn. The congregation impressed no less by the act of the lady, than by the novelty of an out-door service, thronged around the preacher while he proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. One of the firstfruits of this service was the conversion of Mrs. Carey, a woman of highly cultivated mind, and of great energy and decision of character. Her husband was a Romanist of education and ability, who could ill brook the errors of Popery and the conduct of the clergy, and thus became a sceptic; but he was brought so far under the influence of religion that he regarded it with favour, was sincerely attached to those whom he believed to be the ministers of the Gospel, and at his death gave reason to believe he was prepared for the great change.

Messrs. Alcorn and Olliffe were appointed to the Dublin district, and in connection with their evangelistic labours distributed numerous copies of the Sacred Scriptures, which in general were eagerly desired. One day in particular, at Naas, fifty-six Bibles and twenty-four Testaments, as well as a consider-

able number of religious books, were in the course of a few minutes bought up, and several seemed much disappointed when the supply was exhausted. The missionaries were not without success among the Romanists, as one after another took courage to come out from the superstitions of their Church, and serve the Lord. At one of the new places opened, the good woman who received the preachers, on being asked how she was led to become a Methodist, replied: "I was brought up a Roman Catholic; but one day, in the street of Baltinglass, I saw a man standing on a chair, preaching; and, going up to see what was the matter, was affected on hearing him speak of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. But, to my astonishment, one man rushed in upon him and snatched the book out of his hand, while another pulled the chair from under his feet, and his head knocking against a wall was severely cut. On rising, as soon as he could recover himself, with the blood streaming from his wound, he manifested such meekness that I felt, notwithstanding the evil reports circulated, he was a servant of God, and I was drawn toward him, until at last the Lord afforded me an opportunity of becoming a Methodist, and gave me to experience in my own soul that peace which passeth understanding.*

It was not until this period that the first Methodist Sunday school was opened in Dublin. The members of the Society and congregations were requested to send their children to Whitefriar street chapel at ten o'clock on Sabbath mornings, and those who came were formed into classes, under the care of a goodly band of intelligent Christian young men and women who were teachers. The ministers acted as superintendents, and preached monthly special sermons to the scholars.

A good work commenced in the neighbourhood of Cork street, through the labours of one of the leaders, who had been placed "under a sort of suspension" which lay heavy on him. As, however, he could not remain idle, he opened a prayer-meeting in this then neglected part of the city; many, both Protestants and Romanists, attended; and the Lord crowned the services with His presence and blessing. The leader then informed the preachers of what he had done, and the result, inviting them

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1808, p. 383.

to go there and preach. They did so, and formed a class, which was placed under the care of him who had sought and collected these sheep in the wilderness. This circumstance ultimately led to the erection of a chapel.

Early in November, Mr. Averell set out on a tour to the south. His first visit was to Bawnlea, where he found much genuine simple religion amongst the people; at Killenaule, there were a few who served the Lord; and at Fethard, "a very benighted town," the evangelist preached for the first time, some pious soldiers being the only persons here who had the fear of God before their eyes. Thence he proceeded to Clonmel, where he was obliged to remain for several days, during which he preached to large congregations, and had much profitable intercourse with the members of Society. At Waterford, he waited on the Bishop, the Honourable Power Trench, who received him cordially, and subscribed liberally to the Irish Mission Fund, as did also the Dean, the Archdeacon, and others of the clergy. Mr. Averell then visited several towns in the counties of Wexford, Carlow, and Kilkenny, and returned home for the quarterly meetings and Christmas services, having witnessed many tokens of the power and grace of God. "So the Churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily."

CHAPTER XXI.

1808.

THE breakfast-meeting in Dublin, on New Year's morning, 1808, proved a time of special blessing. There were present about three hundred persons, including Dr. Stopford, of Trinity College, who said he was reminded of the meeting of the primitive Christians in the upper room at Jerusalem. Here it was that the idea of an Old Men's Asylum, was started by Mr. Ayckbowm, who said that while the Society had provided for widows and orphans, the poor and destitute, nothing had been done for men advanced in life, and unable to obtain a livelihood. His remarks made a deep impression on those present; and subsequently, in connection with members of other evangelical churches, the institution was established.

On January 12th, Ouseley writes from Ballina: "Hallelujah! More and more are coming to our Redeemer, in both town and country." These triumphs were not all obtained directly through the preaching of the word; some were led to the Saviour as the result of the fidelity of individual members. Thus as one family in the country was engaged at prayer, the cloud of the Lord's presence overshadowed and overwhelmed it, an earnest cry for mercy arose, and one young woman was most blessedly filled with the pardoning love of God. She began at once to urge others present to seek and they would find the same blessing; and thus the work spread.*

Four weeks subsequently, the missionary writes again: "Three Romanists have been lately awakened, and joined our Society here." One of these was a man of good understanding and some reading, who having seen another who had been very wicked, weeping and praying, went to hear the preaching which produced such effects; and attended again and again until he obtained

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 188-89.

salvation. His wife had been a Presbyterian, and on her marriage accompanied her husband to mass; but had no comfort as she was, nor could she in Popery. When her husband received mercy, she became alarmed at what he said. He told her to look to Jesus; and the Lord revealed His love to her heart, filling her with joy unspeakable. She then went to the services to hear for herself, and one night stood up in the congregation, and with a flood of tears, told what the Lord had done for her soul. Amongst other things she said, that once, in the distress of her heart, she said to the priest, "I fear I am not right at all, I am going astray;" but he bid her not to be afraid. "But now," she added, "I am in heaven, my soul is happy, happy."*

A large meeting, conducted by the missionaries, was held in the church at Easky. Many Romanists attended, the power of the Lord was present, and souls were saved. The newly formed societies became pretty well established, endeavoured to conform to the rules, and although very poor, desired to contribute to support the cause. The missionaries laboured to complete the new chapel at Ballina, which the previous Conference had given permission to build, but found it no easy matter "to gather up as many tenpenny pieces among the poor people" as would be sufficient; but they gave cheerfully what they could spare.†

As a man, named Frank Shannon, was one day returning home from Ballina, he was attracted by the voice of Ouseley preaching out of doors, in Irish. It had a charm for the ear of Frank, so he and his wife pushed through the crowd to get near the preacher. Having listened for a while the wife, not relishing the home-thrusts of the missionary, plucked her husband's coat, and asked him repeatedly to leave; but he always replied, "Wait till we hear him out." The truth preached that day found a lodgement in a mind exceedingly dark, and previously, wholly destitute of the fear of God; and Frank went home an awakened sinner. Mr. Ouseley soon found his way to Ballinagavna, and was entertained in the house of a man in better circumstances than Shannon. A society was formed of those who had received the truth, of whom Frank was one of the first, and from that

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 191-92.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1808, pp. 381-82.

time until his death, the class meeting was a service he greatly loved, and from which he never willingly was absent. The host of the missionary having given him to feel that he was unwilling to bear any longer the reproach or expense of his position, Mr. Ouseley, after preaching one night, said, "Frank, I'll stop and preach in your house." "Oh, sir," said the other, "I'd be delighted to have you, but what shall I do for a bed? The only one myself and my wife have is straw." "Can you give me straw and a blanket?" asked the missionary. "I can sir," replied Frank. "Then I'll be with you, please God, this night month," said Ouseley. "Ah then, sir, it's myself that will have a *cead mille failthé* for you." "And, sure enough," said Frank, more than thirty years subsequently, "he came, preached, held the prayer-meeting, met the class, slept on the straw, and put up with my poor fare. I have never been a month since without a preacher. Frequently I have had them once a fortnight and oftener. Best of all, I have my wife converted, all my children converted, and their houses homes of the preachers. And now, glory be to God, all my grandchildren, who are capable of it, are converted. My highest wish, next to beholding my glorious Lord, is to see Gideon Ouseley in heaven." This was said with weeping eyes, and an earnestness and pathos which showed that the hope of the aged pilgrim was full of immortality. While the property and family of the man whose house Mr. Ouseley forsook, all melted away, Frank Shannon became comfortable as a small farmer, lived a blessing to the neighbourhood, died in the triumph of faith, and has left his offspring following in his steps.*

In the south, the missionaries, Messrs. Bell and Taylor, succeeded in obtaining several important openings, in addition to the one already referred to at Kilworth, where there were nineteen members, including some of the most influential inhabitants of the village. Several visits were paid to Passage West, and services held in the open air, although it was feared the missionaries would be driven off the street; but they were determined to stand their ground. A society was formed of twelve persons, including Messrs. William Brown and Michael Wallace, who for

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 177-79.

many years were the leading Methodists in the town. Mr. Bell remained for a few days at Cove,* “a most ungodly place,” now for the first time visited by the itinerants. He preached frequently in English and Irish, on the quay, receiving sometimes very harsh treatment, and at length secured a large room for evening services, as well as obtained the names of twelve persons willing to join the Society. At Spike island, about one hundred Protestants and Catholics attended the services regularly, and the officers proved firm friends, placing sentinels front and rear of the house in which a meeting was held, because a mob had made some disturbance. The Commander at Camden fort afforded the missionary an opportunity of preaching to his men; and at Carlisle fort, there was a class of eighteen members, including at least one converted Romanist. They built for their services a house which could hold between thirty and forty; but as the accommodation here was insufficient, Mr. Bell preached in a large room in the barracks.

Success was not, however, confined to the labours of the missionaries. At Milltown, Mr. Peacock held a quarterly meeting, which continued from a Friday until the Tuesday following; and at it the presence and power of the Lord were displayed in a glorious manner. This probably was the longest meeting ever held in connection with Methodism in Ireland.† The success of the servant of God aroused the hostility of the enemies of the truth. One night a furious mob attacked a house near Listowel, in which he lodged, calling lustily for the preacher, and, while they smashed in the front door, he escaped at the rear, almost naked, and lay concealed in the fields for several hours. From the physical effects of this exposure, Mr. Peacock never afterward fully recovered, and his promising career of usefulness was prematurely cut short.

At this period, there was in Coleraine a noble band of young men, who were exceedingly useful in the town and neighbourhood. These included Daniel Macafee, then an apprentice in the establishment of Mr. Stephen Douthett, and Thomas Waugh, as well as a number of others, who for many years were the leading Methodists in the circuit. Waugh had been a member of the

* Now called Queenstown.

† Lanktree's Narrative, p. 190.

class of Dr. Maginnis, by whom he was greatly beloved. One day the doctor expressed very decidedly his conviction that the Lord had a work for his young friend to do in connection with the Methodist ministry, and in about an hour afterward dropped down dead. This deeply impressed the mind of Thomas, who thenceforward regarded the intimation he had received as a call from Heaven; and as it was corroborated by his own convictions and the authority of the Church, he began to preach. His first effort was in a country cottage, where he took for his text, "It is good for me to draw near to God." Ever after through life, when speaking of this service, he was wont to add, "And so it has been with me always." Mr. Tobias was on this circuit, and through his influence Mr. Waugh was not only greatly stimulated and strengthened, but also recommended to the Conference and placed on the list of reserve.

The labours of Messrs. John Hamilton and James Rutledge, in this neighbourhood, were much blessed, many souls being saved, several societies raised up, and a complete new circuit formed.* At a place near the Giants' Causeway, probably Bushmills, the Society was increased from a few to about one hundred.† The members, however, were not ever and all what they ought to have been. Thus one day Mr. Tobias arrived at Croaghmore, where he was entertained by honest James M'Mullen, and after dinner, the host said, "We haven't been doing well since you were here last, Mr. Tobias." "What's gone wrong, Jemmy?" "Ye know thae Toamsons, sir, at the back o' the hill?" "You mean the tinker bodies, do you?" "Yes, sir." "I thought they were getting on well. What has happened?" "Weel, they hae shamed us a' in their behaviour comin' frae Scotland." "Why, what have they done?" "They jist got drunk in Bushmills, an' fell out on the road; and John grieved the wife a beatin' wi' a leg o' mutton he was bringin' hame for their Sunday's denner." "Shocking! shocking!" said the preacher. "Were they not members of Society?" "'Deed were they?" "Oh, we must put them away from us." "Wait a wee, sir; dinna be sae fast." "Why, what would you have me do, Jemmy?" "Weel, ye see, sir, they are vera sorry, puir bodies, for what they hae

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1808, p. 382.

† *Lanktree's Narrative*, p. 191.

dune, an' we're a' troublet about them. They'll be at the preachin' the night, an' if ye would jist meet the class after preachin', they'll be there, for they're no willin' to part frae us, an' ye can jist hear the story frae themsel's, and ye'll maybe then see better what to dae wi' them." "Very well, Jemmy, so be it. Perhaps you are right."

At preaching the two culprits appeared, and the members of Society being requested to remain after the public service had closed, they did, and the Thompsons with them. In the ordinary course of the class, Mr. Tobias came to the poor offenders, and said, "Well, Thompson, I am sorry to say I have heard some sad stories about you and your wife." "Nae doot, sir, nae doot," said the poor man, slowly rising up in the corner, where, with his wife beside him, he had taken his seat. "Yes, I have heard that you and she got tipsy in Bushmills, that you quarrelled when coming home, and scandalized yourselves on the public road." "It's a' true, sir; it's a' true." "Well, that's very sad. But, come, let me have the story from yourself, before we say what is to be done with you." "A weel, sir; ye see we had been owre tae Scotland wi' our bits o' tin ware, an' were comin' hame in a wee ship wi' the gudes we bought wi' what we got for what tin ware we selt. The vey'ge was lang, sir, for the wind was again' us, and lang afore we got to Port Ballintrae, our bit o' sea-store was a' dune, an' what wi' the cauld an' the hunger, we were jist amaist famisht when we landed. We tried to buy somethin' tae eat in the town, but not a morsel o' breed could we get to buy. There was naethin' to be had but the whusky, an' we did take a glass, baith o' us. It maun hae got to our heeds, for by the time we got tae Bushmills, we were ready for anither, an' we tuk it, an' that made us willin' to gang farther wrong, an' we tuk anither glass, an' then it was time to set aff for hame. As we walkit along, Jean here begun to make a jeest o' me. She said a was a bonny Methody, no able to walk straight on the public road afore folk, that a wad hae a nice experience in the cless on the Sabbath morn. She was vera aggravatin', sir, for she was jist as bad as mysel'." "'Deed a was," broke in Jean, as she sat crying in the corner. "A tell't her," continued John, "tae haud her tongue, but she wudna', but keepit jeerin' at me still. An' a tell't her again to haud her tongue, but she wudna', an' at last

a gi'ed two or three chaps o' the side o' the heed wi' the leg o' mutton I had bought for our denner on the Sabbath day." "An' weel I deserved it, sir," said Jean. "But oh! sir, we're sorry, sorry for it a' ever since," and down he sat, weeping bitterly.

"That is a sad, sad story," said Mr. Tobias. "Here were you, your wife, and your children, living without God; these good people pitied you, brought you to their meetings, and, God having touched your hearts, invited you to join them in Christian fellowship. You seemed to improve in every way, when all at once you gave way to temptation, plunged into sin and shame, and brought reproach on your friends. What are we to do with you?" By this time there was hardly a dry eye to be seen. "I am afraid," resumed the preacher, "we'll have to put you away from amongst us." "O, sir, dear, dinna dae that, dinna dae that. If ye put us oot, wha'll tak us in?" exclaimed poor John. "Aye," said Mr. Tobias, "that's true. If we put you away from us, there will not be a soul to care whether you serve God or the devil. You'll probably go from bad to worse, and lose all hope of good. What shall we do?" Then, after a pause, he continued, "On one condition you shall be allowed to remain in the class and meet with your old friends." "What's that, sir?" said John. "It is that you and Jean promise solemnly here that you will have nothing more to do with what has brought all this shame and sorrow on you,—I mean the whisky." "Ah! 'deed, sir, ye needna say anither word aboot that. In our ain bit cabin we have baith promised afore the Lord that we'll never touch it again a' the days o' our lives." "Very well," said the preacher, "on that condition you shall continue to meet with these good people, and they'll counsel you and pray for you; and the Lord Himself will be your guide and strength. Come, let us pray. Jemmy M'Mullen, pray for these poor penitents;" and so they prayed, and a right good time they had of it.*

The Conference met on July 1st. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. William Ferguson, secretary. The following nine candidates were received on trial:—John Waugh, of Ballymacawley; William Gilcriest, Clones; James C. Pratt, Rathdowney; James Johnston, Sturraghan; Robert Carson, Omagh; Thomas Waugh,

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1877, p. 207.

James Lynch, Samuel Downing, and Samuel M'Dowell. There was one death, William Wilson, who "died in great peace, assured of an eternal reward through our Lord Jesus Christ."

A decrease was reported in the membership, although five new circuits had been formed by the missionaries, with upwards of seven hundred members. In the Address to the British Conference it is said: "Our missionaries are still much honoured of the Lord; and we trust that our mutual efforts in the cause of pure and undefiled religion will be attended, more than ever, with the blessing of the Author and Finisher of our faith." The number of missionaries continued the same, as the places of Messrs. Alcorn and Thomas Johnson, who resumed circuit work, were supplied by Messrs. Matthew Stewart and John M'Adam; and arrangements were made that a collection should be taken up in all the congregations on behalf of Methodist missions throughout the world.

It was evidently feared in certain quarters that through the influence of some of the preachers in England, the Conference would widen the breach between it and the Established Church. Mr. Knox writes that the attempts at innovation which he had apprehended passed wholly off. "Adam Clarke has got other employment, which will keep his hands as well as head busy for much of the remainder of his life; and Mr. Roberts was prevented from coming by the indisposition of his brother-in-law, Mr. A. Guinness; so that the Methodists are exactly where they were, and, this late cloud being thus dissipated, are likely enough to remain so until some new movement shall take place from causes not yet apparent. I therefore feel disposed to continue all my friendly endeavours where opportunity shall offer."*

Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley were appointed to the counties of Galway and Clare, which they found to be "a most uncultivated country with regard to religion, Popery being prevalent everywhere, and the Scriptures but little known." During the first journey of the missionaries round their mission, all was peace, and the people listened to them with great delight; but when the priests heard of it they took alarm, sounded the tocsin of war, and opposed the work to the utmost of their power.

* Thirty Years' Correspondence, p. 426.

Hamilton says, he never saw them so enraged as at Eyrecourt. One of them, during an open-air service, came into the crowd, whip in hand, and struck and beat all before him, ordering them to go away; but some of them said plainly they would not. Ouseley desired him to let the poor people alone, and if he had anything to say to come and speak to himself; but his only reply was that he would curse them all on the following day, which was a Sunday. Nothing daunted, the missionaries again took their stand at the same place, as the people returned from mass; and notwithstanding all the threats of their reverend father, many came to hear. At Galway also, large numbers assembled, late and early, both out of doors and in the court-house. Not one unkind word was heard; and even in their houses, the Romanists received the visits of the servants of God courteously and kindly. At Athenry, the Catholics eagerly purchased all the Testaments that were for sale. A few members also, including two Romanists at Aughrim, were added to the Societies in several places visited.

From Galway, the missionaries went to Clare, a hard and stony ground, with a few scattered handfuls of Protestants and immense distances to travel. At Ennistimon, though the people received the evangelists at first with affection and even enthusiasm, yet on their return, some came forward to insist that they should not preach there again, and, had it not been for the presence of some of the North Cork militia, would have brought the service to a summary close. Next morning, the mob resorted to violence, stones were thrown, and some persons hurt; but the missionaries escaped without a blow, and were conducted out of the village in safety by their military friends.*

Returning to the county of Galway, at Portumna, while the evangelists preached in the street to a very attentive audience, a priest came with a mob and attacked them. Fortunately, the frost bound the stones, so that they could not be used; but sticks and sods were employed freely. "The priest," says Hamilton, "beat my horse greatly, and the people dragged him down on the street and I on his back;" and had it not been for the timely interposition of the military, the missionaries would

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1809, pp. 220-22.

certainly have been killed. The officer in command, on hearing of the tumult, said, "The priest shall not have his will;" and at once ordered out his men, who, with loaded pieces and fixed bayonets, formed a square about the missionaries until the service was ended, and then escorted them out of the town. But they little thought that the mob had gone before them, about a mile and a half, and there lay concealed until the evangelists came up, when they were again surrounded, and assailed amid yells and shouts, "as if Scullaboge barn had been on fire." A big priest, who was very drunk, attempted to pull Ouseley down, but Hamilton came to the rescue of his friend, and they once more escaped; but not until they had been robbed of their books, and Ouseley was hurt, and lost his hat. "Cruel mockings," said Hamilton, "are nothing, and showers of stones and dirt are but play; but bloodshed and battery are no joke." In a few days, however, both the books and hat were returned through a local magistrate.*

Messrs. Bell and Taylor continued their labours in the south, with not a few tokens of the Divine blessing. The officer in command of Spike island expressed his gratification at their visiting it, and promised his assistance in providing accommodation for the services. Although the majority of the people on the island were Romanists, a society was formed of fifteen members, one of whom was a local preacher. At Camden fort, the officer in charge refused to allow the missionaries to preach in the little chapel that had been built; but application was made at once to the superior officer at Cove, and he gave the required permission. At Passage West, a commodious room in the Baths was placed at the disposal of the evangelists, and large congregations attended, many of whom were deeply impressed through the preaching of the truth. At Crosshaven, where there were about fifteen families of Protestants and many Romanists, the latter at first were most wishful to listen; but the priest hearing it became so enraged, and uttered such terrible threats, that the people were afraid to go again to the services. Here a class of twenty-four members was formed. At Millstreet, a society of thirteen was constituted. At Mallow, where the new chapel was nearly finished, and there was an

* Lanktree's Narrative, p. 201; *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1809, p. 222.

increase in the Society, the congregations were so numerous that numbers had at times to leave, unable to find accommodation.

The missionaries were also much encouraged in Kerry, where they believed the good work would have been still more extensive, but for the disturbed state of the country. At Milltown, the services both in the house and out of doors, were made a blessing to many. One Sunday, the people both from church and mass attended; but the priest to prevent a recurrence of this, at least so far as his flock was concerned, on the next visit of the evangelists, remained himself, to see that none of his people attended. On another occasion, the officers and men of the yeomanry were all present, and at the close, twenty-two came forward, and with much emotion offered to join the Society. This number was soon nearly doubled. Nine were won for Christ and His cause at Tralee; and at Castleisland, although the shouting of an unruly mob exceeded anything the missionaries had witnessed elsewhere, they had a good time. But their adversaries, not being satisfied, resolved to attack them that night, and twenty or thirty assembled and got drunk for the purpose; however, such a terrible hurricane arose that the malicious project had to be abandoned. At Ballyseedy, there was a numerous audience, many of whom were Romanists.*

Methodism had now been in the western part of the county of Donegal for about twenty years, but the principal members having emigrated, the Societies were dissolved, and the itinerants obliged to withdraw from many of their preaching-places. For some years the ministers on the Ballyshannon circuit made excursions into this benighted district of country, but apparently with little permanent success. At length in 1806, some local preachers visited Maas, good was done, and amongst others Mr. John M'Cullough was led to a saving knowledge of the truth. He then invited his neighbours to come to his house for singing and prayer, and the preachers visited the place once a quarter. Thus a society of upwards of twenty members was formed, which, notwithstanding much opposition, continued to prosper.†

This year Messrs. Matthew Stewart and Olliffe, having been appointed to Donegal and Tyrone, entered with zeal on their work.

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, pp. 483-84.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1814, p. 158.

Beginning in Donegal, they rode through the eastern part of the county, and in almost every place the Lord accompanied His word with much power. Then leaving their horses, the missionaries set out on foot, over fields and ditches, mountains and bogs, to remote districts, and were appalled at the ignorance and wickedness they witnessed on every hand. It was truly "the region and shadow of death," there being large numbers who had never entered a place of worship or bowed their knees in prayer for years, while drunkenness, gambling, lying, and profanity abounded. Here the servants of God visited from house to house, reasoning, expostulating, and praying with the people, Catholics and Protestants, large numbers of whom inquired with tears when they would return, and entreated them for Christ's sake, to come soon. Thus no less than thirty openings were obtained for the preaching of the Gospel, and in twenty-four places numbers were led to abandon their cards, profane swearing, and frivolous songs; while even the scenes of former dissipation and folly became vocal with the sound of prayer and praise. The children also were taught to commit to memory portions of the Sacred Scriptures, and welcomed the visits of the missionaries with great delight.*

Similar success attended their labours in Tyrone. Amongst the new places visited here was the house of Mr. William Graham, Rawfort, where the local ministers "manifested no concern for the souls of the people, nor had they any regard even for morality." Many came to hear, the house became a regular stopping place of the preachers, Mr. and Mrs. Graham were converted, and the former was appointed a leader of the class in his own residence, an office that he sustained with much acceptance for nearly half a century.†

The good work in the county of Armagh, already referred to, spread greatly during this year. At a protracted field-meeting held at Maghon, near Portadown, it was estimated that not less than five thousand persons were present. Mr. Alexander Moore preached, and the Spirit of God was poured out in a remarkable manner. Hundreds were brought into such distress that their cries could be heard afar, and many of them were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. At the close of the service, the people retired to their respective places of abode, singing the

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1809, pp. 176-78.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1858, p. 279.

praises of God, and carrying in their hearts a leaven of Divine truth, the powerful influence of which was subsequently felt by multitudes. Meetings were then held at Scotch-street, Cockhill, Derryhale, Richhill, and Dawson's Grove, at which there were numerous and glorious displays of Divine power.

Amongst others, two daughters of a gentleman, who resided near Richhill, were converted, and joined the Society, which greatly displeased their father. He commanded them to give up all connection with Methodism; but they refused, saying, that they must obey God rather than man. One Sabbath morning, the father, on finding that one of his daughters had been at class, seized a horse whip, hastened to their room, and declared that he would make them pay dearly for their disobedience. The elder sister having vainly remonstrated with her infatuated parent, expressing her willingness to obey him in every matter but this, requested that as her sister was delicate, she might receive all the punishment, but was sharply told they would both get enough of it. Then wiping away the falling tear, the brave girl stepped forward and said, "Now, father, I am ready; but remember every stroke I receive is for the sake of Him who suffered more than all for me." This was more than the parent was able to stand, so throwing the whip away, he rushed out of the room, exclaiming, "Oh, wretched man that I am, going to punish my children for serving the Lord!" The girls then knelt down, and, while devoutly thanking God for their deliverance, were sent for to unite in prayer with their sin-stricken father, who was crying aloud for that mercy which God is ever willing to bestow. Thus was fulfilled the Divine assurance, "Call on Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." *

Mr. Lanktree, with Mr. Kidd as his colleague, was at this time on the adjoining circuit, of which Charlemont was the head, and found a people prepared of the Lord. In addition to a faithful discharge of the ordinary work of the round, opportunities were seized of holding meetings out of doors, which proved a means of much spiritual blessing; multitudes attended, the great truths of the Gospel were applied with power to the hearts of the unsaved, and the Lord's people were much encouraged. At these meetings

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, p. 416.

Mr. Kidd rendered valuable service, his fine commanding voice, copious eloquence, and untiring zeal having full scope. On one of these occasions, at Tullyroan, the power of God was gloriously manifested. While singing a verse of a hymn, a respectable young woman, who had been for some time seeking the knowledge of salvation, was so deeply moved that she fell to the ground; others were soon affected in a similar manner, so that hundreds in that vast assembly, overwhelmed with a sense of the Divine presence, fell prostrate in holy adoration. It was a time never to be forgotten. At another of these meetings, at the residence of Mr. Lock, Cockhill, after Mr. Kidd had preached in an orchard, the service was adjourned to a large vacant house for prayer. Here the sacred influence was such that the preachers could do little more than stand still, and see the salvation of God. Some of the stoutest men in the congregation fell on the floor, crying earnestly for mercy, while others who had obtained Divine consolation, rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Amongst the latter was Harrison Lock, who had been on his way to a public house, when he was met by a friend and entreated to come to the meeting. He yielded, and soon felt the arrows of the Almighty pierce his stubborn heart. When the prayer-meeting commenced he retired to a room by himself, pleaded with God for pardon, and when the Lord in loving compassion manifested Himself to the soul of the earnest seeker, he rushed in among the penitents, crying aloud, "You may all obtain mercy, for God has pardoned Harrison Lock!" The effect was most thrilling, his sister and another member of the family were then and there convinced of sin, and soon afterward, having received a sense of the pardoning love of God, shouted in a transport of praise.

One of the places visited by the preachers was Summerisland, the residence of Mrs. Davis, who was converted during this blessed revival. One day she said to Mr. Lanktree, as he was about to leave, "I hope you will not forget to pray for me, as I am persuaded you will not see me alive on your return." Her health being then delicate, it was as she apprehended: she died in the full triumph of faith. At her funeral, one man said to another, "Our neighbour is gone to heaven." "Aye," was the reply, "but where are you and I going?" Thus both were deeply convinced of sin, and subsequently enabled to rest on Jesus as their Saviour.

The conversion of these two proved the commencement of a blessed awakening in that district of country, during which many were raised from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness.

While thus attention was given to the great work of leading sinners to the Saviour, the temporal wants of the needy were not overlooked. An association for the relief of the distressed, and of the sick poor, was instituted in Armagh by Mr. John Noble and Mrs. Lanktree. Visitors were appointed to inquire into all claims, and then report at the weekly meetings, where the cases were carefully examined. This plan made a very favourable impression on the public mind, removing much prejudice against Methodism, and exciting a spirit of benevolence and liberality. Many strangers were thus induced to listen to the word preached, and a feeling of good will diffused amongst the community.

CHAPTER XXII.

1809.

ALTHOUGH Messrs. William Hamilton and Ouseley did not witness this year as extensive and cheering a work as during the previous twelve months, they were not without numerous tokens of the Divine presence and blessing. At many places, in their vast round of two hundred miles, there were prospects of good, and several new openings were obtained. The missionaries laboured chiefly in Clare, where the people were much scattered, yet over the whole extent of this large county, they did not leave a single Protestant family unvisited. The most secluded tracts on the wild coast beaten by the Atlantic, the mountains and bogs, were all traversed in search of even one lost sheep. The accommodation obtainable was sometimes in a cottage, often in a cabin, and not unfrequently in a hovel. At one place, the preacher's room had only one small window, choked with nettles and hemlock, while the walls were covered with sepulchral green, and the earthen floor so soft that the feet sank into it. "When I entered the bed," says Reilly, "I thought of my grave." No wonder that on this ground, the brave and faithful William Hamilton was soon disabled.*

Numerous as were the privations thus endured, they were in harmony with the moral soil cultivated. Ouseley writes: "How pleasant to range through meadows fair, and fields productive of crops in various stages, ready to make the tiller's heart to dance; where there are meandering crystal streams, and sweet fruits clustering all around! But to have the huge rocks, hard as adamant; wild deserts, where savage beasts seek their prey, and scarcely a green herb is found; how dreary is the sight! When the poor traveller does not know where to rest his weary head, how

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 180-81.

dismal the contrast ! This is our case ; yet glory to God, He is with us, and thus ' Labour is rest, and pain is sweet.' Some of the solitary places are becoming glad ; the desert begins to sing and blossom as the rose. Friendship and good-will appear. We have now from twenty-four to thirty places to call and lodge at ; and in two classes, for which we have got leaders, there are about sixty or seventy members, with a prospect of more." *

At Kilrush, many attracted by novelty assembled to hear the word ; the seed fell into prepared hearts ; and thus a number of houses in the adjacent country were opened to the missionaries. In a short time, however, several families removed to other parts of the country, and thus the stopping places were reduced to one humble cabin, where the messengers of peace frequently proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. Amongst those who attended the services in this lowly abode, was a Miss Catherine Cox of Mount Pleasant, whose heart the Lord opened so that she attended to the things spoken by His servants. Thus the preachers were invited to the house of her father, Joseph Cox, Esq., where they were long kindly and cordially entertained.†

On the Cork district, considerable success attended the labours of the missionaries, notwithstanding much opposition. Mr. Bell writes :—" Large numbers of the army and others have lately joined our Society ; many Romanists hear, and there is a cry amongst the people for the Word of God." At Milltown, the members admitted during the previous year, many of whom had been very ungodly, continued firm. At Tralee, although the priests endeavoured as much as possible to prevent their people from attending the Methodist services, it was in vain, as numbers heard when the missionaries preached out of doors. At Cove, " an infamous sink of sin," about fifty Protestant families resided who were friendly to Methodism. One Sabbath afternoon, as Mr. Bell preached in the open air, a drunken young man tried to upset him, and failing in this resorted to throwing stones, but with equal lack of success. That evening the Lord opened a place for preaching in a house where a few pious persons lodged, who were waiting for a vessel to sail for Tortola. The new class at Passage West prospered, and the people contemplated the erection of a

* Lanktree's Narrative, p. 204.

† *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1822, pp. 86-87.

chapel. At Charleville, the Society numbered twenty, chiefly soldiers, some of whom had been notoriously profane, but now afforded unmistakable evidence of a renewed life. At Mallow, the members were increased from seventeen to twenty-eight, most of whom were in the Londonderry militia. Mr. Bell preached at Riverstown to "about one hundred and fifty wild raging creatures," who shouted loudly, threw different missiles, sounded a horn, and in other ways endeavoured to disturb the service; but the missionary persevered, and at length succeeded in gaining a patient hearing. At Blackpool, he was listened to with more attention than ever previously, while the Romanists present appeared much affected.*

Hitherto the Methodists led the way, and laboured almost alone in the important field of Sunday school work; but now other denominations had their attention directed to, and heartily engaged in it. In the opening of 1809, Mr. Parnell, the superintendent of Maryborough school, meeting Mr. Averell and some others in social intercourse, the conversation turned upon Sunday schools, and the difficulty of obtaining financial aid for them. Mr. Parnell inquired, "As the English cannot help us, why should we not have a Sunday school society of our own for Ireland?" The suggestion thus made being unanimously approved of, Mr. Parnell asked Mr. Averell, "What would you give to the society if it were formed?" "Ten pounds donation at once," replied Mr. Averell, "and two guineas a year subscription." Forthwith the gentleman who had started the idea took further and decided action upon it; so that in the following November, a meeting was held in Dublin of leading Christian men, including Alexander Boyle, Esq., J.P., formerly of Kirlish Lodge, chairman; James Digges La Touche, Esq., secretary; Thomas Parnell, Esq., Martin Keene, Esq., and Dr. D'Olier,—nearly all names familiar to the readers of this work; and then and there was formed the Hibernian Sunday School Society, which subsequently changed its name to that of the Sunday School Society for Ireland—an institution which for more than seventy years has been one of the most important wheels in the moral machinery in operation for ameliorating the condition of our benighted country.

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, pp. 521-22.

At Belfast, the interest in Sunday school work was aroused by the action of certain Deists, who tried to disseminate their pernicious views through the medium of a Sunday school. Christians took alarm, and thus two schools were opened in 1809. One was established by Mr. Henry Hall, in the house of Mr. Thomas Ewart. The other was commenced in Smithfield, where two rooms in the old House of Industry were obtained. Children were collected from the adjacent lanes and alleys, and soon there was a great attendance. Another school was then started in Union street, by a Mr. Booth, who was very energetic, and soon collected a large number of scholars. These two schools were subsequently united, and in 1816 merged into the Brown street Sunday school.

Early in May, Mr. Averell made an evangelistic excursion in the north. At Strangford, he preached to large congregations in the church, and the word was accompanied with Divine power. Thence he went to Downpatrick, where in dispensing the word of life to a crowded house, and subsequently in administering the Lord's supper to about three hundred communicants, there was a remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At Banbridge, the evangelist had a refreshing time, "amongst a steady, wise, loving people, who did honour to the cause of religion, and brought glory to God." Next was visited Portadown, where an audience of upwards of fifteen hundred assembled in the open air, many of whom appeared to feel deeply under the word; and the chapel was not able to contain those who desired to unite in commemorating the death of Christ. In this part of the country Mr. Averell visited Lurgan, Tanderagee, Derryanvil, Moyallan, and several other places. Owing to the vast crowds that attended his ministry, he was in general obliged to preach in the open air, and in most instances administered the Lord's supper to large numbers of communicants. At Tamnaghmore, "many hearts were melted before the Lord." At Charlemont, a vast concourse of people assembled in the open air, upwards of four hundred of whom joined in partaking of the memorials of their dying Lord. At Armagh and Clonmain, the word of life was dispensed to crowded audiences, with blessed manifestations of the Divine presence.

From Newry, where Mr. Averell had a large congregation, he

proceeded to Castleblayney, and arrived in time to preach at the quarterly meeting. There was "a numerous attendance, much of the Divine presence, and a sweet season of refreshing." Next day, he discoursed at Clontibret, with much comfort to himself and profit to others, and was entertained by Mr. Swanzy of Millmount. At Monaghan, there was a good audience of "happy, lively people." During the quarterly meeting at Smithborough, a blessed influence rested on all present. Next morning at Clones, there was a crowded congregation, and in the evening nearly two thousand assembled in the open air, to as many of whom as could press into the preaching-house the Lord's supper was administered. With the "respectable, steady, and loving Society" at Belturbet, the evangelist spent a very happy day; and in the evening and following morning proclaimed the truth to large and attentive audiences. Thence he went to Kilmore, stopped with "honest brother Creighton," and preached to a lively people in the evening. At Corlisbrattan, there was an "immensely large congregation," and the word was accompanied with a blessed manifestation of saving grace. These were memorable times, greatly acknowledged of God, and fraught with blessing to the people.

Indeed throughout the north generally, the work prospered much. On the Lisburn circuit, unusually large numbers assembled to hear the word preached, and listened with seriousness. Many were thus savingly converted. At the March quarterly meeting, Mr. Dinnen says, he "could do little more than look on and see sinners weeping and saints rejoicing; it was a day of God's power, and many received remission of sins." At a meeting held near the town in May, it was estimated that at least four thousand persons were present. Before the congregation was dismissed, the penitents were requested to retire to an adjoining chapel, which was quickly filled. At a place called "Hell-upon-earth," on account of its open infidelity and wickedness, several were led to a saving knowledge of the truth, and a large class formed. "The Lord," said Mr. Dinnen, "is thrusting out the devil and Paine, and we are pursuing our victory."* On the Donegal and Tyrone mission, through the Divine blessing on

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 123.

the labours of Messrs. Matthew Stewart and Olliffe, about two hundred members were added to the Society.*

At this time Mr. Alexander Crookshank,† second son of the Honourable Judge Crookshank, resided in Londonderry, where he practised as an attorney. Mr. Nathaniel Alcorn, of Lough Muck, having occasion to visit him on legal business, seized the opportunity of urging the necessity of a change of heart in order to enter heaven, and did so with such earnestness and power as led the solicitor to carefully examine the teaching of the Word of God, and also to attend for the first time a service in the Methodist chapel. Here he was brought under deep conviction of sin, in which he continued for some time, but at length the Lord lifted upon him the light of His countenance, and enabled him to rejoice in a conscious sense of sins forgiven. From this period, notwithstanding much opposition, he heartily identified himself with Methodism, and rendered the cause important and valuable service.

Mr. Crookshank, having been requested to prepare a will for a gentleman, who was seriously ill, when he had discharged his professional duty, earnestly urged on the dying man the necessity of preparing to meet God, and presented Christ crucified as the only ground of a sinner's acceptance. The awakened sinner was thus led to rejoice in believing with joy unspeakable; he cried out, "Why are His chariot wheels so long in coming?" and at length exclaimed, "I must see Jesus; I shall see Jesus; I do see Jesus;" and expired.

It has long been the custom for lawyers attending assizes and sessions to dine together. On one of these occasions, Mr. Crookshank, having retired for a short time, on returning found that Methodism was the theme of general conversation. "Oh, Crookshank," said an Arian barrister, "you make too much ado about religion." The natural reply was, too much importance could not be attached to that on which our eternal salvation depends. "Well!" said the advocate, "what are we to do to be saved but keep the commandments?" "Pray," inquired the attorney, "have you ever broken any of the laws of God?" "Aye, hundreds of times." "Gentlemen," Mr. Crookshank

Methodist Magazine, London, 1810, p. 486. † Father of the author of this work.

proceeded, "here is a queer thing. A lawyer tells us he is to be saved by keeping commandments, which he admits he has broken hundreds of times." Completely cornered, the barrister had the candour to acknowledge he had not studied the subject as he ought to have done.

This gentleman had a relative, an Episcopal clergyman, who on being invited to a Methodist service, declined, saying, he did not like the preaching of justification by faith. On Mr. Crookshank inquiring how he expected to be saved, he looked as if he had never considered the question, and then replied, "By faith in Christ." "How am I to be saved?" "By faith in Christ." "And, how is the world to be saved?" "By faith in Christ." "Here," said Mr. Crookshank, "is a strange thing: a clergyman objecting to the preaching of that doctrine by which the world is to be saved!" "But," replied the other, "there never was an instance, but that of the thief on the cross, of one being thus saved." "That," answered the attorney, "is the most awful statement I ever heard, that only one person has been saved by the only means by which salvation can be procured!"

An able and eloquent king's counsel was brought, through conversation with Mr. Crookshank, under such deep conviction of sin, that many wondered he was so long seeking earnestly, without obtaining the blessings of salvation; but the attorney told him plainly, it was because he was unwilling to give up sin, especially strong drink, which he took at times to excess, and that if he did not turn from his evil ways he could never enter heaven. But the infatuated man thought otherwise, endeavoured to seek the Lord while serving the devil, and, alas! failed so signally that, while under the power of the demon that enslaved him, he put an end to his own life. Such are a few incidents that occurred in connection with the work of Methodism in Londonderry.

But to return to the south. One day, a waiter at an inn handed to a curate, the Rev. William Digby, a number of the *Methodist Magazine*, which proved the means of quickening him into spiritual life. As he read an account of the labours and sufferings of the missionaries, he thought that they must have had some principle of action of which he was ignorant, or they would not have been able to endure so many trials.

Long and earnestly did the young clergyman seek this principle, and at length became its happy possessor. Then indeed all was changed, his brilliant talents were consecrated to the Divine service, and he began to preach "Christ and Him crucified" to people with whom he had often joined in following the hounds, or in the giddy dance. Of noble appearance, winning manner, and good family, it is no wonder his old associates deplored his loss; while even his father was offended and disinherited him. But nothing daunted, he waxed stronger and stronger in the Lord, and in the power of His might; and thus in Killukin, an humble parish in the diocese of Elphin, entered on a career of usefulness, that extended over a period of nearly sixty years.*

Conference met on July 7th, with Dr. Coke as president, and Mr. Mayne, secretary. Richard Price of the Longford circuit, and William Foote of Lisburn, who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months; and Edward Hazleton of Moy, William Rutledge, George Erskine, and John Nelson were admitted on trial. There was one death, William Harrison, a man of sound judgment, integrity, and zeal, who travelled for only seven years, and died happy in God. An increase was reported in the membership of one thousand two hundred and eighty-five. Collections had been made throughout the kingdom on behalf of the Mission Fund, which amounted to upwards of £226. This was remitted to the general treasurer in England, and out of the fund in his hands were paid all the expenses of missions both in Ireland and abroad, previously borne by Dr. Coke, and his unwearied and persevering labours.

In the Address to the British Conference it is said:—"The Lord has been graciously pleased to be with us through the year, blessing our labours with abundant increase, and also during the whole of our Conference, enabling us to speak and act from the pure principle of love, even that love which winks not at moral evil, which gently reproves, and scripturally corrects, while it enables us to enter into the sufferings and sorrows of each other, and to bear each other's burdens."

Mr. Ouseley commenced his second year on the Galway and

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1866, p. 490.

Clare mission, under rather unpromising circumstances. His colleague was William Rutledge, who brought into the work a frame unequal to its hardships, but laboured long enough to record of his leader, "Mr. Ouseley preaches more on his horse's back, as he rides along his way, than in all his sermons." Before this young man had spent a year in missionary labour, his health gave way; and this, of course, threw additional care and work on Ouseley, who toiled on. He made Ennis his centre, from which he went forth to all the surrounding country, not only maintaining the ground already gained, but exploring new places to the extremities of his extensive district.

In one of the secluded spots thus visited, where a society was formed, the hostility of the enemies of the truth was roused, and they resolved to crush the novel heresy. Several banded together for this purpose, and one more desperate than the rest undertook to be their leader, and went to a meeting of the class to see what he could do. On the first hymn being struck up, he said, "This is very purty, I'll not disturb them;" when prayer was commenced he resolved to let them alone until it was ended; and as one after another rose to speak, he thought he would like to hear what they had to say. The Spirit of God was at work in his heart, so that when the leader came to address him, the would-be persecutor cried out, "Lord have mercy on me! What shall I do? I'm a wicked sinner!" After suitable counsel, those present united in earnest prayer on his behalf. Meanwhile those without became impatient at the non-appearance of their companion, and shouted "The devil's among the Swaddlers;" little suspecting that the strong man armed was bound and cast out, and the man out of whom he had departed was "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind."* In December, one of the missionaries writes that a score or two in the county of Clare had emerged from darkness, and found the pearl of great price, while about one hundred and forty met in class.†

Ouseley, having been informed that there was, within a few miles of Borrisokane, a very destitute neighbourhood, where a considerable number of Protestants resided, at about Christmas

* Reilly's Memorial of Ouseley, pp. 163-64.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 126.

went in quest of them. On his way thither, he stopped at an inn in the town, and on inquiring if there were any Methodists living there, was told there was none, but there were two or three persons more attentive to religious exercises than their neighbours. One of these, it appeared, had been a Methodist, and the others were Baptists. An opportunity of seeing these friends was seized by the missionary; and thus the houses of Messrs. William Haskett and Anthony Holland became homes for the preachers. These two good men and their excellent wives, who were sisters, proved faithful and devoted members of the Society.*

Messrs. Bell and Taylor continued on the Cork and Kerry mission, and found that at Tralee all open opposition had ceased, while some of the militia were led to join the Society. At Macroom, there were good congregations, although no class was formed as yet. And a society of twelve was commenced at Douglas.†

On September 21st, James Field having obtained his discharge from the army, arrived at Cork. The devout emotions and resolves with which he returned to this city, where for forty years he was "a burning and shining light," and where so many "rejoiced in his light," are thus sketched by his own hand:—"I came off the coach at three o'clock in the morning, went to the chapel in Patrick street, laid down my knapsack and sword, kneeled on the flags outside the iron gate, and heartily praised the God of all grace for all His mercies to me: for protecting me in storms and dangers by sea, and in all the battles and sieges, without having ever lost a drop of blood, or been taken prisoner; and for having brought me out of the army with a character honourable to religion, and creditable to myself. I begged of Him, that as He had discharged me from the service of an earthly king, He would now enable me to take 'the whole armour,' and wield 'the sword of the Spirit' faithfully to my life's end. He heard and answered. Blessed be His name, it was a time never to be forgotten."‡

Mr. William Hamilton was appointed, with Mr. Edward

* Reilly's Memorial, p. 164.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 523.

‡ Memoirs of James Field, p. 52.

Hazleton, as a missionary on the Newry district, where he soon formed a new society of about thirty members at Carlingford, and also obtained other promising openings in the neighbourhood. Romanists in more or less numbers attended every service, whether in doors or in the open air. He preached on each market day in the streets of Newry, where hundreds from the mountains listened with attention. One day in particular, having strongly urged the reading of the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice, some of the hearers said, "You have been telling us to read the Bible, but how shall we get it?" Much grieved that he had no copies to give them, the missionary subsequently obtained some; and when he announced that he had them for the Roman Catholics, they followed him to the house, and gratefully took all he had.*

Mr. Lanktree, in addition to the ordinary extensive labours of the Charlemont circuit, was appointed to collect money to redeem and finish a new chapel at Moy; to rebuild the house at Clonmain, which had fallen into decay; and to build a chapel at Tullyroan; and by prayer and persevering effort this work was accomplished. A cheering addition to the number of preaching places was made, in the residence of Mr. Langtry, Belview, near Richhill, where the servants of God were received with cordial hospitality, and every facility afforded for preaching the Gospel. Several members of the family were thus led to give their hearts to God.

In Coleraine, Mr. Kidd preached each Saturday in the market; and on the Sabbath, in addition to the ordinary morning and evening services, met the children at half-past ten o'clock, and conducted an afternoon meeting in the open air. At one of these outdoor services, in front of the jail, he refers to the prisoners listening with profound attention at the windows, and shouting their thanks at the close. "In Coleraine," he writes, "we have had one of the most happy love-feasts I ever witnessed. Believers were unusually filled with heaven, and others brought into a sweetly penitent state. In going round the circuit, we found that some happy effects had followed from all our meetings. Indeed there is scarcely a week in which the Saviour does not

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 125.

gather some of the fruits of His passion; and to teach us, poor 'tinkling symbols,' how little He is indebted to us, conversions frequently take place when neither of us are present, and sometimes in places where we have never been. Still the work of God is carried on, and therein do I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."*

Messrs. John Hamilton and Nelson were appointed to the Newtownlimavady mission; and the latter says that he regularly accompanied his superintendent to the market, where numbers would be deeply affected by his earnest and pathetic addresses. "Indeed, it was impossible to remain unmoved while the grey-headed ambassador of Christ, with tears streaming down his venerable face, besought sinners by the agonies of Christ, by the joys of heaven, and by the torments of the lost, to be reconciled to God." The influence of this devoted man on Mr. Nelson during this forming period of his ministerial career was deep and valuable, and to the latest hour of life a source of devout gratitude. Once a month, on Saturdays, the young preacher went to Coleraine, to hear Mr. Kidd preach in the market, and assist him at the service. Mr. Nelson's first sermon in the open air was preached for Mr. Kidd, in the Diamond, Coleraine, on which occasion a man, who had been a prominent enemy of Methodism, and a woman were convinced of sin, which filled the young preacher's heart with sacred joy, and led him to "thank God and take courage."†

Early in December, Mr. Averell made an evangelistic tour, which included some of the midland and northern counties. At Birr, he felt "great life and liberty in addressing a large congregation." At Carrick-on-Shannon, the word was accompanied with power to many hearts; and some realized peace and joy in believing. Thence he proceeded to Mohill, and had a blessed time in preaching to about three hundred deeply attentive hearers. Next day was a memorable season at Mr. George West's. About twenty members of the family were present, all under the hallowing influence of Divine grace, and in their intercourse the Lord was as the dew unto them, watering and refreshing their souls. At Ballyconnell, the evangelist was hospitably received by the Rev. Newcomen Whitelaw, and his amiable wife,—one of the

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 208-10.

† The Memory of the Fathers, pp. 39-40.

Slacke family. Having preached in Belturbet on the following morning, Mr. Averell proceeded to Newtownbutler. It was the day of the quarterly meeting, which was one worthy of being had in remembrance. The Lord blessed His word, and the love-feast was a heavenly banquet.

Having visited many places in Fermanagh, the servant of God arrived at Mr. Scott's, Pettigo, where he spent a blessed Sabbath, meeting the Society, preaching twice to large congregations, hearing an excellent sermon in church, and in happy social intercourse. Next day, being Christmas, was also signalized as a time of blessing. A gracious service was held in the morning from six until nine o'clock; and in the evening, at David Reid's, Tullylark, the service was crowned with still more abundant blessing. Here, notwithstanding the place being so retired, the badness of the roads, and the darkness of the night, a multitude of people assembled, to whom the Lord manifested Himself in power and mercy. At Lisleen, there was a numerous and serious congregation. On the following day, during the quarterly meeting at Drumclaph, God gave ample testimony that the glory had not departed from this old seat of Methodism. There was a large assembly of people, "who had not only the appearance but much of the life and power of vital religion." Mr. Averell spent the three remaining days of the week in attending quarterly meetings at Newtownstewart, Omagh, and Fintona, all of which were crowned with the Divine presence, and favoured with blessed outpourings of the Spirit of God. The devoted evangelist then spent the Sabbath at Fintona, in which he preached twice to large congregations in the Presbyterian meeting-house; and in a watch-night service solemnly ended the old year, and made a joyous beginning of the new.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1810.

METHODISM at this period received further attention from ecclesiastical quarters. In the autumn of 1809, Dr. Magee published a second edition of his celebrated "Discourses and Dissertations on the Scripture Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice," in which he seized the opportunity of making a number of grave but groundless charges against the Society. It is much to be regretted that a work in other respects of such intrinsic worth should have been thus so greatly marred, more especially as the objections raised are altogether outside the important doctrines under discussion. Amongst the accusations brought by the doctor against the Methodists are:—"that vain self-complacency which exults in the reflection that they are not as other men;" "the extravagant dogmas of sinless perfection and miraculous impulses which are the distinguished tenets of the sect;" "indifference about every other doctrine;" and "uniformly regarding the clergy as dumb dogs, priests of Baal, wolves in sheep's clothing, etc." The very mention of these charges, which no unprejudiced and intelligent person could make, is their own refutation. The learned doctor was, however, taken to task by the Rev. Edward Hare, in a pamphlet, entitled, "A Refutation of the Charges against the Methodists advanced by the Rev. Dr. Magee." In this it is shown that no new objection had been raised against the Society, but only a few old and trite charges, which had been repeatedly answered; while the doctor's uncandid method of preferring the testimony of enemies of the cause to that of friends, as well as his care in separating passages in the writings of Wesley from their context, which would explain their meaning, argues design, and betrays a secret suspicion of the weakness of his case.

Turning our attention to those engaged in evangelistic work,

we find that on January 1st, 1810, Mr. Averell visited Ballaghneed near Clogher, where he was the guest of Joseph Wallace, Esq., and addressed in the evening a large assembly, in a neat and commodious chapel, built solely at the expense of his host, about nine years previously, and given to the Connexion. At Glaslough, there was a great crowd in the market-house, and subsequently a very blessed love-feast. Here ground for a preaching-house had just been obtained from Colonel Leslie, who was friendly to the cause. The congregations at Cootehill were good. "Few societies," says Mr. Averell, "equal this in maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and the result is a steady perseverance in the ways of God." An agreeable and profitable Sabbath was spent with the kind and hospitable family of Foxbrook, by whom religion was not only professed but honoured. About thirty were present at each service, upwards of twenty of whom were Foxes! The Society at Monasterevin was full of life and zeal, and the Lord gave them sweet meltings of heart under His word preached, as well as at the love-feast. At Abbeyleix, the devoted evangelist preached to the largest congregations he had seen there for several years, and the Lord accompanied the word with His blessing to the hearts of the people. The attendance at Kilkenny was unusually good, and there was much of the Divine presence. Some souls had been lately brought to God here, the Society was greatly quickened, and the prospect more cheering than it had been for a long time previously.

At Enniscorthy, a blessed work of awakening was in progress, chiefly through the instrumentality of Captain Hawtrey, a retired military officer, who had served under Wellington in the Spanish Peninsula, and had recently been converted. He was a man of noble appearance, with a military bearing, and a voice that commanded attention, and was now actively and successfully engaged in work for Christ. Mr. Averell, accompanied by his new friend and brother, proceeded to Wexford, where the Society was flourishing. A happy time was spent in ministering the word of life to a numerous audience at New Ross, and in social intercourse with some truly devoted Christians there. At Waterford, there were large and deeply serious congregations, with much of the Divine presence, and numerous tokens of spiritual prosperity. At Mallow, Mr. Averell says he never paid so happy

a visit to the town, the cause had gained so much, and appeared so encouraging. There was a good chapel, large congregations, a society walking humbly with God, and cheering evidence of a good work amongst some of the influential inhabitants of the town. In Cork, the audiences both in Patrick street chapel and Hammond's Marsh were exceedingly numerous; and the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. At Kinsale, there were as many present as the house could contain, and the Lord made it a season of much blessing. At Bandon also, there were similar tokens of religious prosperity.

At Killarney, a terrible scene of strife appeared; it was as if M'Carthy More and O'Donoghue had come back to earth, and abandoned themselves to all their old feudal lawlessness. Two powerful factions were ranged against each other in deadly conflict, and seemed for hours to threaten the whole town with destruction. Popery was enthroned in the neighbourhood, and the effects were apparent in the ignorance, superstition, and barbarity of the great mass of the people. Yet religion had made some progress in this benighted locality, as no less than two hundred persons assembled at each of the services in the court-house, all of whom listened with deep attention, and some with much emotion. No little interest was added to Mr. Averell's visit to this town by the presence of six persons who stated that they had been converted eleven years previously, when he preached to a few at the cross-roads, near Kenmare, and was arrested as a person dangerous to society. At Milltown, there was a very blessed quarterly meeting, and in the social gatherings gracious visitations from on high. At Tralee, where there was a good and firmly-established society, Mr. Averell preached in the neat chapel recently erected, to more than two hundred attentive hearers. Mr. Busteed, by Divine grace, had kept a little spark alive here for twenty years, and now had the happiness of seeing it kindled to a flame. At Limerick, there were crowded congregations addressed by the devoted evangelist, and also by Miss Cambridge. The former also held forth the word of life in Templemore to a large number of attentive hearers; and then returned home so shattered in health as to be completely laid aside for some time.

The missionaries on the Cork district considered this the



best year they had in that trying field of Christian work. An opening was obtained by Mr. Taylor on Bear island, where a society of forty was formed. Classes also were commenced at Ballincollig and Haulbowline, with sixteen and seven members respectively. At Douglas, a preaching-house capable of seating about one hundred persons was completed; and at Cove, where the lives of the missionaries had been in peril, the whole appearance of affairs was changed. What was then a most eligible site for a chapel was secured from Lord Middleton at a nominal rent, and a considerable sum subscribed towards the new erection. In this undertaking most valuable help was rendered by Mr. Robert Mackee, formerly of Waterford, but now surveyor of excise at Cove.

The labours of Messrs. Olliffe and James Johnston, on the Donegal and Tyrone mission, were also much owned of the Lord. The former writes:—"Never was I a witness of such power attending preaching and prayer. Many times it seemed as if a nation were about to be born in a day, or righteousness to overflow the land. It was common to hear of three, five, ten, or twelve persons converted at a meeting."* Thus four hundred and forty members were added to the Newtownstewart and Rathmelton circuits.

Mr. Ouseley, after repeated visits to Borrisokane, resolved to form a society there. Accordingly on Easter Monday, accompanied by Mr. Averell, he took down the names of sixty persons as admitted on trial. Amongst the firstfruits of the labours of the missionaries in this town was a young man, named Thomas Ballard, who, on seeing Ouseley preach in the open air, prompted by curiosity drew near to hear. Soon the word came home with power to his heart; and becoming deeply affected with his condition as a lost sinner, he cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" These early impressions resulted in his obtaining redemption in the blood of Jesus, and consecrating himself to the work of the Christian ministry. Many others also believed unto salvation. Thus doors were opened for preaching, and societies formed through the surrounding country.† One of the most important and encouraging of these was in the house of

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 486.

† Reilly's Memorial, pp. 165-66.

Mr. Edward Gaynor, Ballingarry, who, during the remaining thirty years of his life, witnessed a good confession, faithfully worked for the cause of Christ, and supported it according to his ability.* In one place in this county, the priest having been informed that some of his people had listened with attention to Ouseley, and even gone to the house in which the Methodist services were held, became so annoyed that he instigated a number of men to lie in wait and attack the missionary on a wild and lonely road; but happily the servant of God got a hint of his danger and thus escaped it.†

One of the leading Methodists in Dublin at this period was Mrs. Theodosia Blatchford, who having made provision for her children, expended the remainder of a large income chiefly in charity; satisfying herself with few of even the comforts of life, in order to administer to the necessities of others. She spent several hours of each day in attending to the education of a number of poor girls, who were not only instructed, but also guided and assisted by her in their subsequent progress through life. She was the foundress of an excellent institution called "The House of Refuge," for unprotected female servants. She also wrote several little tracts, and translated from the French a memoir of the Baroness de Chantel.

Mrs. Blatchford's only daughter, Mary, who was married to her cousin, Henry Tighe, Esq., M.P., was remarkable for the loveliness of her person, the fascination of her manners, and her high mental culture. She composed numerous beautiful poems, and amongst them a most exquisite and celebrated allegory, entitled, *Psyche*, which had a rapid and extensive sale. It is a painful task to trace the life of this highly gifted young lady, who for no less than nine years continued to pass from one degree of suffering to another, until March, 1810, when the hour of her deliverance came. She had a great mental conflict to pass through; for her philosophy and her reading, though they did not pervert her mind, had induced a speculative tendency of reasoning, which inclined towards scepticism. At length, doubtless in answer to her mother's prayers, she was enabled by faith to lift her eyes to Him from whom her help came. Two days

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1839, p. 334.

† *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 485.

before her life on earth ended, she said: "I have long struggled with the fear of death, but I can now feel that God is the strength of my heart, and He will be my portion for ever." The following beautiful elegy to her memory was composed by the poet Moore:—

" I saw thy form in youthful prime,
Nor thought that pale decay
Would steal before the steps of time,
And waste its bloom away, Mary!
Yet still thy features wore that light
Which fleets not with the breath;
And life ne'er look'd more purely bright
Than in thy smile of death, Mary!

" As streams that run o'er golden mines
With modest murmur glide,
Nor seem to know the wealth that shines
Within their gentle tide, Mary!
So, veil'd beneath the simple guise,
Thy radiant genius shone,
And that which charm'd all other eyes
Seem'd worthless in thy own, Mary!

" If souls could always dwell above,
Thou ne'er hadst left that sphere;
Or could we keep the souls we love,
We ne'er had lost thee here, Mary!
Though many a gifted mind we meet,
Though fairest forms we see,
To live with them is far less sweet
Than to remember thee, Mary!"

The Conference met on July 5th, and as Dr. Coke who had presided every year except two, for twenty years, and had been appointed to do so again this year, declined to act, Mr. Averell was unanimously elected president. Mr. Wood was secretary. George Burrows and Edward Johnston, who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months, and seven candidates were admitted on trial. These included William Reilly of Cookstown, William Finlay of Magheracoltan, Joshua Harman of Cork, John Carey of Faughart, Robert Wilson of Lislea, and Arthur Noble.

In the Address to the British Conference it is said:—"Arrived at this period, we look back with hearts deeply affected with gratitude to the God of all our mercies, for His goodness

eminently exercised towards us in the past year. None of our preachers have died, and notwithstanding the painful exercises and afflictions of some of our dear brethren, 'having obtained help of God, we continue to this day.' But that which above all demands and excites our praise is this, that the great Head of the Church has blessed our labours, and employed us as instruments in His hands of turning sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. Nearly two thousand have been added to our Societies since the last Conference, many of whom we have no doubt are joined to the Lord in one spirit. This blessed enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom has taken place partly in the regular circuits, and partly by means of the missionaries, whom the Lord has made peculiarly successful in opening new places. Our Conference has been one of the most blessed we have ever known; a solemn and comfortable sense of the Divine presence rested upon us. Many things of deep concern and importance have come before us, and all have been impartially discussed in the fear of the Lord; our decisions have been such as to give general satisfaction, and we trust are acceptable to God. One common sentiment prevails among us, and that is Love,—Love to God, to His Church, and to each other."

Mr. Thomas Waugh was appointed to the county of Kerry, and *en route* thither paid a visit to one of the Palatine settlements, which deeply interested him. He was kindly received, but required to preach. In vain he pleaded weariness, having had a long and fatiguing journey. No preacher, it was said, passing through was excused from giving a sermon. He urged that there had been no notice, and therefore there could not be a congregation. "Well," said the Burgomaster, "you shall see; please come with me." The young itinerant proceeded to where the little chapel stood in the centre of a green, skirted by cottages, into one of which he was requested to enter and visit a sick sister, and then all would be ready. Meanwhile his guide opened the door of the preaching-house, brought out a cow's horn, and putting it to his mouth made the valleys ring. On hearing it, every man dropped his spade or other implement, suspended his work, and, obeying the well-known signal, hastened to the place of worship, which was thus promptly furnished with a serious, praying con-

gregation, to whom the message of mercy was delivered. The German accent still clung to the old settlers; for on leaving one house a patriarch squeezed the hand of the preacher, saying, "Got pless you, my tear young man." *

Probably during Mr. Waugh's long itinerancy, there was no circuit concerning which he cherished a livelier recollection than Milltown. His ministry here was greatly acknowledged of God, in the conversion of many careless Protestants and not a few Romanists. It was most likely on this circuit he had periodically to ride through a small town, where he was followed with hootings, and received much abuse; in consequence of which he called on the Romish Bishop, told him the facts, and added, "Now, if we are all to go to Jack Scratch by-and-by, we might be allowed some peace while we are here. I know you can prevent this annoyance, and if you do, I shall be obliged." The next time Mr. Waugh visited the neighbourhood, his host told him that his man-servant had come home from the Catholic chapel, saying, "Shure, sur, we had the greatest sarmint to-day. The priest said, there niver can come a dacent gintleman through the town, but ye get to hallooin after him, and insulting him. And it's me that has to suffer for it all. But I tell ye, ye blackguards (clenching his fist), if iver I know ye do it agin, I'll give ye the worth of it." After this plain and practical homily there was no more annoyance.

On August 3rd, Anne, daughter of Mr. William Smith, a young lady of devoted piety, was united in marriage to Mr. William Barry of Bandon. Shortly after her arrival in the town, she opened a school for young ladies, and continued with unwearied diligence and general approbation to discharge the duties of teacher till within a few days of her death. She so endeared herself to those under her care that they not only loved her as a parent, but also at least respected her religion, while many of them were led to consecrate themselves to the service of God, and become useful and lifelong members of the Society. She was soon appointed a leader, and her members so increased, that they had to be divided into three classes. One evening when at class, after a day of severe mental conflict, as one of those present repeated the first verse of the hymn beginning, "O Love, thou bottomless

* Crook's Centenary of American Methodism, p. 69.

abyss," Mrs. Barry was enabled to believe for full salvation ; and thenceforward God's service to her was unwontedly easy, and work for Him attended with special blessing. Early in 1823, her health gave way, and she suffered much, but was enabled to write : " If ever I could say from my heart, ' Father, not my will but Thine be done,' it is now. For the last eight or ten weeks my sky has been almost unclouded." Shortly before her death, she said with as much energy as the feebleness of expiring nature permitted, " The world recedes, it disappears ; heaven opens to my eyes," and in this spirit of joyful and triumphant faith passed hence, to mingle with the ransomed spirits that surround the eternal throne.* Mr. Barry was for many years a leader and trustee, and had charge of the choir. " He was a faithful man and feared God above many."

Nelson and Reilly were appointed to share with Ouseley the hard lot and endless toils of a mission field, which included a great part of the counties of Galway, Tipperary, and Limerick, and the whole of Clare. Reilly first met his veteran superintendent on a Sunday evening at Killaloe. Already that day the young missionary had ridden some thirty-one miles, and preached, but had now to deliver another discourse. After the sermon, Ouseley gave an address, during which he related the circumstances of his conversion, nineteen years before, when the Lord took away his intolerable burden of sin and guilt ; " And then," added the evangelist, " three months afterward, my great Prince who sits upon the throne, said, ' Behold I make all things new.'"

Next day the two missionaries proceeded to Ennis, where were quartered the Leitrim militia, many of the officers in which were favourable to Methodism, and several of the non-commissioned officers, as well as privates, members of the Society. A gracious work was in progress among them, not a few through the ministry of Ouseley having been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. This was most favourable to the cause in the town, as it not only strengthened the Society, but gave the missionaries greater facility and security in preaching in the streets. For about a month, Ouseley and Reilly travelled together, during which, says the latter, some of the congregations addressed were not less

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1825, pp. 725-29.

than four or five thousand, and consisted of rich and poor, Protestants and Catholics, who listened with deep attention, and in numerous instances appeared much affected.

At the latter end of July, Reilly arrived at Galway, and on reaching the usual place of meeting, found it to be a kind of cellar in a miserable back lane, surrounded with herring stores. In the congregation was an elderly gentleman, a Mr. Maberly from London, who at the close of the service, having introduced himself to the preacher, said most emphatically, "Mr. Reilly, this will never do; the Methodists of Galway must have a suitable place for the worship of God. I am not a Methodist, but on my return home I will speak to some of my friends, and shall get something to assist you in building a chapel." This promise was faithfully kept. Two hundred and fifty pounds were obtained by this gentleman, and handed to Mr. Averell, who collected one hundred and fifty more, and thus was able to remit four hundred pounds to Mr. Ouseley. Eight chapels were then built at a cost of thirteen hundred pounds, the balance being raised by subscriptions chiefly in Connaught. The Protestant clergy and gentry gave freely, and even many Romanists, including some priests, were amongst the contributors. In Galway, the Catholic Warden subscribed a large sum, and appended a strong recommendation to his clergy and people to follow his example, giving as his reason, that it would prevent Mr. Ouseley from preaching in the streets. No mean testimony to the blessed results of open-air services!

Reilly had heard so much of his superintendent, that he imagined such a public man could not possibly find time to visit small places, or form and shepherd little societies; but it proved to be far otherwise. In their long rides, every town through which they passed heard Ouseley's deep voice roll out, in both English and Irish, the message of grace. One day after they had travelled far to Ennistimon, where he preached with vehemence, they rode on five miles, and neither of them tasted anything until about nine o'clock, when the evening meeting had closed. This was always the case in that particular house, where the only pretence of a window was a polygon piece of glass stuck in a green sod. Next day the missionaries reached a place still more remote, where they were received by two women, who, while Ouseley sang a hymn of thanksgiving, went off to the fields and brought some

sheaves of oats, which were toasted over the fire, and then ground as a repast for the itinerants.

One day Mr. Reilly, riding alone to a preaching-place on a tongue of land called the West, bounded by the Atlantic and the Shannon, found wilds succeeded by sterner wilds, till bare mountains, terrific cliffs, and the lone ocean were all the eye could see, and wondered however such a retreat had been discovered. At last a neat cot cropped up on the moor, disclosing the precious grains for which Ouseley had penetrated so far. The family had already received the good word, and with them and a few neighbours the young missionary enjoyed the communion of the Church in the wilderness.

One Sabbath, at Kilrush, Ouseley began a service amidst a multitude of Romanists, when a servant in livery excited the mob to disturbance, and missiles were sent flying in all directions. One of these struck the missionary and staggered him, giving a blow, from the effects of which he did not recover for weeks. However, some gentlemen at length interfered, or there is no saying how the tumult would have ended. Nothing daunted the missionary preached again, both that evening and the following morning, and also wrote to the gentleman whose servant had caused the disturbance, informing him of the circumstance. The master was much displeased at the conduct of his lackey, and not only gave orders that the evangelists should not be interrupted any more, but placed the upper room of the market-house at their disposal. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee, the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain."

At Galway, the missionaries obtained for two evenings the use of the court-house, which was well filled with Romanists, while on Sunday the congregation, says Ouseley, was not less than three thousand, many of whom listened with deep emotion. The people of Ennis, notwithstanding all the priest said, continued to attend the out-door services, without giving any opposition; and about forty were received into the Society. At Borrisokane, the congregations numbered about five hundred, seventy of whom met in class.*

Messrs. Deery and Harman, who were on the Cork district,

* *Methodist Magazine*, London. 1810, p. 486.

represent their mission field as like an extensive garden, newly broken up, but not completely enclosed. In some parts the soil was light and unproductive, in others stubborn and unyielding, and in more very rocky, yet there was not a little good ground. At Millstreet, the work was very low; at Haulbowline, some members had removed and the rest had died away; while at Carlisle fort and Ballincollig, the commanding officers refused to allow any meetings to be held, and thus some went back to the world and others held on in spite of the very trying position in which they were placed. At Cove, the new chapel, of which not a stone had been laid at Conference, in October was nearly finished; and the preaching-house at Passage West, for the erection of which Conference had given permission, was also commenced with as little delay as possible.*

Messrs. Thomas Kerr and M'Adam were appointed to what was called the Belfast mission, and found that most of the people amongst whom they laboured were Presbyterians, many of them inclined to Arianism, and more hoped for salvation at death, and thus were prejudiced against Methodism. However, large numbers attended the services, and their aversion to evangelical truth gradually lessened. The missionaries frequently visited and prayed with the people, from house to house, and at length were enabled to form several new classes, with one hundred and ten members, thirty of whom were happy in the pardoning love of God, and the remainder appeared in earnest to obtain the same blessing.†

Mr. Hazleton was appointed as a missionary to the barony of Boylagh, with instructions to interchange quarterly with Mr. George Burrows on the Ballyshannon circuit, and entered on his work with characteristic zeal and success. Amongst the numerous openings which he obtained for preaching, was one in the house of a widow at Clonconwal,‡ between Ardara and Glenties, where, having collected a congregation, he proclaimed the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. The people were astonished at this novel doctrine, and it formed the subject of much conversation, until Mr. Burrows came round, when he was asked if he

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1810, p. 487.

† *Ibid*, p. 524.

‡ Not Glenconway as has been generally stated.

believed it, which of course he stated clearly he did. One of the first who sought and found a conscious sense of the Divine favour was the son of the hostess, a young man of uncouth appearance, who subsequently not only engaged heartily in work for Christ, but by diligent study greatly improved his mind. Mr. Hazleton encouraged him to preach, often taking him to his appointments, which led him to be called "the preacher's boy." The rector of the parish, an ungodly man and much given to drink, was greatly incensed against young Elliott, for these Methodist practices, and on one occasion took him severely to task. "Do you not believe, sir," said the clergyman, warmly, "that your father went to heaven?" "I trust he did." "Then, sir, is not the Church that took him to heaven good enough for you?" "To the Church," said the youth, "I have no objection, but were I to follow some of her ministers, I fear I should never reach heaven."

Subsequently the young convert was appointed parochial schoolmaster at Pettigo, where his character soon secured the friendship of the most respectable Methodist family in the place, and he was invited to their house. The Rev. W. Ingram, the clergyman of the parish, generally spent his evenings with Mr. George Smyth, his father-in-law, and met Elliott in whom he took a deep interest, rendering him valuable aid, in classical studies, with special reference to entering Trinity College. But here again the schoolmaster's Methodism gave offence, so that the non-resident rector intimated that he must either give up the Society or the school. The prompt resignation of Elliott disappointed both rector and curate, and it was only withdrawn on the assurance that thenceforward he should be at perfect liberty to follow his conscientious convictions. This incident, however, was not without its influence on the future life of the young man. Looking at the constitution of Trinity College as it then existed, he concluded he could not enjoy its advantages without a compromise of principle, and therefore after much thought and prayer, resolved to emigrate to America, where by his untiring labours and varied and accurate scholarship, he won a world-wide reputation as the Rev. Charles Elliott, D.D.

Early in December, Mr. Averell set out on one of his tours southward. At Kilkenny, he had a numerous audience, and found the Society steadily progressing. At Rathduff, he discoursed in a

new chapel, erected by a Mr. Smith solely at his own expense ; and at Enniscorthy, met Captain Hawtrey. Both preached here, at New Ross, and at Waterford to large congregations with manifest tokens of the Divine presence and blessing. At Carrick-on-Suir, notwithstanding the prevalence of Popery, there was a society of lively and zealous Christians, amongst whom the devoted evangelist had a good time. To this state of things, Clonmel presented a sad contrast : dissension having scattered the Society, and left the few who remained with but a name to live. Yet a considerable congregation attended the service, and soon appeared to feel the power of the truth. At Kilworth, through the Divine blessing on the unwearied exertions of Mrs. Carey, the spark of religion was kept burning in a benighted place ; and here Mr. Averell had about fifty hearers, as he conducted the closing service of the year.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1811.

ON January 1st, 1811, Mr. Averell, at Kilworth, addressed greatly increased congregations, and many seemed to feel the power of the truth. Thence he proceeded on his evangelistic tour, preaching at Cork, Cove, Bandon, Kinsale, Mallow, Millstreet, Killarney, and Milltown, in all of which the audiences were unusually large, and the tokens of spiritual prosperity numerous and most cheering. At Limerick, he was joined by Mr. Ouseley, and the two devoted evangelists spent a fortnight in visiting Ennis, Kilrush, and several towns in the county of Galway. Notwithstanding the severity of the season, Ouseley generally preached out of doors, and surprised his companion by the Christian fortitude with which he bore rudeness and insult; although there were many who listened with great attention, and not a few with much emotion. In some places visited, especially Galway and Tuam, there were gracious outpourings of the Spirit, so that several were awakened, and some enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. Mr. Averell then went on alone to Westport, Newport, and Sligo, in each of which large numbers assembled to hear the word preached. At Ballymote, the audience was small but deeply serious; at Mohill, it was "genteel;" and at Athlone, better than he had ever seen there before. At Aughrim, there was "an overflowing congregation," and the Lord accompanied the word with much power. Mr. Averell preached at Birr with more encouragement than he had witnessed in that town for a long time. At Borrisokane, there was an immense crowd; at Shinrone, many more than the house could contain; and at Roscrea, very large congregations, about three hundred being present at the quarterly meeting, which proved a memorable time.

In spring, we find Ouseley's first mention of Connemara, where he speaks of dining with a priest of "rather good information," at

the house of a gentleman who had for two years forsaken mass. The preacher and the priest had a controversial, yet perfectly friendly, conversation. The former preached to three families, and some Romanists, all of whom were in tears. The gentleman showed the tenacity of company incident to such remote localities, and did not leave the missionary until midnight, which, for him, when doing anything else but pleading among penitents seeking mercy, seems to have been an hour unknown. He says: "They wished to lay an embargo on me, but I came away in the midst of a great storm, as I must, as it were, fly from place to place." Alluding to the work at Borrisokane, he states: "We have more than one hundred and fifty, perhaps nearly two hundred in the Society; and six blessed class-leaders." Clare he describes as "the worst ground for the Gospel he ever met with," yet, even there, sons and daughters had been born of God.

During one of the missionary's tours at this period, a young soldier in the 42nd regiment, named James Horne, was led to religious decision. He proved to be a convert of rare value; for, having given evidence of superior gifts and grace, his discharge was procured, and eventually he did a noble work for Christ in the West Indies, and had a son who became a missionary in Western Africa.*

At the beginning of summer, Mr. Ouseley held a field-meeting in the lawn of Ballynavin, near Borrisokane, kindly given for the purpose by James Wilson, Esq. Here it was calculated many thousands assembled, not only from the surrounding towns, but also the adjoining counties. Mr. Reilly says he never afterward saw such a multitude at an open-air service. Mr. Clegg preached first, then Mr. Ouseley, "Oh, with what effect!" and then Mr. Reilly closed with an exhortation. It was a season of abundant spiritual blessing.

A commodious chapel was erected in Waterford, chiefly through the self-denying labours of Mr. William Stewart, who travelled through the kingdom, earnestly urging its claims, was unremitting and unwearied in his efforts during the progress of the building, and on its completion had the satisfaction of setting it apart for the worship of God. A member of the Society in the

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 193-94.

city writes of this devoted minister:—"Although his name is not inscribed on the building, it is indelibly engraven on the hearts of a grateful people, amongst whom he laboured for many years with a fidelity and zeal that will never be forgotten."

A young man named Arthur Park, a native of Longfield, in the county of Leitrim, was at the Conference of 1810 placed on the list of reserve. He had previously settled in the county of Cavan, where, being possessed of extensive property, his Christian liberality, ardent piety, and tender sympathy made a deep and lasting impression in the neighbourhood. During the year, he was sent to the Boyle circuit, where his labours were much owned of the Lord. His career, however, was very brief, for having caught a malignant fever on March 2nd, he died soon afterward happy in God.

Much is said in the present day about healing by faith. The following may be accepted as a well-authenticated instance that occurred more than seventy years ago. Mary M'Cullough of Roosky, Fermanagh, was for six months confined to bed, her limbs being so contracted that she could not stretch them out or stand on her feet. She was much cast down, thinking that she would be a cripple for life, and a burden to her friends. Some pious persons endeavoured to encourage her, saying that if God saw good, He could soon restore her. She was thus led to read and dwell on several portions of Scripture bearing on this subject, until enabled to believe that the Lord Jesus could as effectually heal her, as He had done many others, when on earth. On Sunday morning, April 28th, she was carried, as usual, to the place where the class met, and while the leader sang and prayed, suffered greatly. She then desired he would speak to her, expecting confidently that would be the time the Lord would heal, and enable her to stand upon her feet. According to her faith it was done to her. She stood upright, found the contraction at once removed, and, walking to and fro, gave glory to God.*

At this time there resided in Dublin a noteworthy couple, William and Elizabeth Haughton, who had been married about twelve months. Mrs. Haughton was chiefly remarkable for her devoted and successful labours amongst the military. Her

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1812, p. 34.

attention was drawn to the soldiers in the Royal Barracks; and seeing that no man cared for their souls, she determined, with God's help, to do what she could for their spiritual welfare. She commenced by visiting the Barracks, and inviting the men to attend the services in Gravel walk chapel; and then formed the resolution, that wherever she met a soldier, whether in the barrack-room or in the street, she would speak to him about his soul, and urge him to give his heart to God. This resolve she carried out through all her subsequent life, and wondrous were the results which followed.

One evening, on her way to Gravel walk, she met a sergeant named Robert Milne, belonging to a Highland regiment, and asked him would he come and listen to a Methodist sermon. He at first refused, but at length turned back and accompanied her, and shortly afterward was enabled to rejoice in the assurance that his sins were pardoned. He at once began to speak to his comrades about their souls, and formed a class for them, by which means many were led to God.

It was Mrs. Haughton's habit to invite soldiers to her house in the evenings, and in a room set apart for the purpose, they held prayer-meetings amongst themselves. It was generally filled, and as they sang and prayed, the room became a Bethel, and thus proved the birthplace of many souls. One evening she left the room and walked along the quays, hoping that she might meet some soldiers and bring them to the meeting. At the Four Courts she met a man of colour, the drummer of a regiment, then quartered in the Royal Barracks; and invited him to the meeting. When they entered the room, she knelt beside him and urged him to pray, but he said he could not. "Have you never said the Lord's Prayer?" she asked. "Yes." "Well now, repeat that prayer after me." He did so, and came again to the meetings, joined a class in Gravel walk, and, before long, George Rose was savingly converted. He shortly afterward left the army and settled in Glasgow, where he commenced to hold meetings. It was his custom on Sabbath evenings to stand on Glasgow Green and preach to listening crowds. On one occasion a man attracted by the rare sight of a black man preaching, drew nigh and listened, and the word spoken reached his conscience. Thus Robert Cooper was led to give his heart to God,

and subsequently join the Society of which he was for many years a useful member.

William Haughton, at the time of his marriage, was living a careless, ungodly life. He was a man of much force of character, with an ardent temperament, and amongst his companions the leader in all forms of wickedness; but withal, generous and affectionate. He gave his wife no hindrance in her work, permitted the meetings to be held in their parlour, and allowed her to carry out all her plans and arrangements, but resolutely refused to be brought in any way under the influence of the Gospel message himself. On Sundays he accompanied her as far as the gate of the chapel, strolled in the park during the hours of worship, and returned to meet her at the close of the service. This was the great trouble of her life. On one occasion when returning home, as she leaned on his arm, and the tears, which she could not repress, ran down her face, he somewhat impatiently said: "What in the world are you always crying about, Bessie? Am I not a good husband? Don't I give you your way in everything? What do you want me to do?" "William," she said, "I cannot help weeping, when I see you walking on the broad way to destruction, and I will never cease to weep and pray until you give your heart to God. I cannot bear the thought of going to heaven without you." Her prayers on his behalf were unceasing. Many of her own spiritual children in the army united with her in continued supplication, and their prayers were answered. On a Sabbath evening, William was walking with some companions along the Old Military road, opposite the Royal Barracks, and standing on a low wall which ran beside the river they saw a soldier in uniform addressing a crowd of people. They paused to hear what he had to say; and while Robert Milne exhorted his hearers to "flee from the wrath to come," and explained to them the way of salvation through faith in the atoning blood of Christ, the words spoken reached the heart of the wanderer, and he returned home under deep conviction of his sin. After his conversion he joined his wife in hearty efforts to further her work amongst the soldiers, became a successful leader, and for twenty-eight years was instant "in season and out of season."*

* *The Christian Advocate*, 1885, p. 534.

Dr. Coke having declined to preside over the Irish Conference this year, Dr. Clarke was appointed to do so. Although this eminent minister was very desirous of revisiting his native country, a little unpleasantness arose, which very nearly prevented his fulfilling the appointment. The publication of his Commentary had begun about this time; and it was eagerly and very generally subscribed for by the Methodists of Ireland. They, however, regarded Dr. Coke with very great respect and affection, and his Commentary also had been extensively read. When, therefore, the first portion of Dr. Clarke's notes made its appearance, and it was seen that he had spoken of Dr. Coke's work with at least an implied censure, they thought he had treated their friend too harshly, and accordingly expressed themselves in strong terms on the subject. Dr. Clarke replied to a gentleman who had written to him, stated the reasons which had induced him to write as he had done, and intimated his intention of giving up the proposed visit. Happily, however, his objections were overruled; so that, accompanied by his brother-in-law, Joseph Butterworth, Esq., and his son, he came to Ireland, and made a brief tour through a part of the country.* This appointment was the commencement of a new era in Irish Methodism. For several years there had been very little intercourse between the brethren on the two sides of the channel, and this was conducted almost exclusively by Dr. Coke as president, and Mr. Averell as representative. But from this period, changes gradually took place in the persons appointed as mediums of intercourse, which has resulted in mutually increased affection, confidence, and advantage.

On May 31st, Dr. Clarke, with his friends, arrived in Dublin, where he availed himself of the opportunity to examine some ancient MSS., in the library of Trinity College, and prosecute some researches in connection with the objects aimed at by the Record Commission. On Sunday, June 2nd, he preached twice to large congregations, including several Fellows of the College and clergymen. On the following Tuesday, having been joined by Mr. Averell, the party left Dublin for a tour through the north, visiting many places of interest, especially the scenes of Dr. Clarke's early life, and the locality where he was brought to a

* Smith's History of Methodism, ii., pp. 498-99.

knowledge of salvation. In the course of this journey he preached to large congregations at Drogheda, Dundalk, Armagh, Charlemont, Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Garvagh, Londonderry, Coleraine, Ballymena, Antrim, Lisburn, Lurgan, Portadown, and Newry. In some of these places the congregations were crowded into the Methodist chapels; at others, larger buildings belonging to the Presbyterians were placed at his disposal; at Ballymena, by the invitation of the rector, he preached in the church; and where such opportunities did not occur, the people assembled in vast crowds in some convenient field, and there listened to the word of life. At Drogheda, he laid the foundation stone of a new chapel, towards the erection of which Mr. Butterworth gave £50; and the local corporation subsequently subscribed £300, having borrowed it at the rate of six per cent. per annum. Dr. Clarke closes the account of his journey thus:—"I have ended my preaching pilgrimage, in which I have spent one whole month, and during that time I have travelled almost incessantly, proclaiming salvation to many thousands; and during the last eight days, preached five times in the open air."

The Conference met on July 4th. Dr. Clarke was president, and Mr. Lanktree, secretary. Of those appointed members of the Legal Hundred by Mr. Wesley, only Messrs. Thomas Barber and George Brown were now connected with the Irish Conference, nearly all the others either having died, or were resident in England. In what way or by whom vacancies had been filled, is not apparent from any record on this side of the channel; but it was now agreed "That the members of the Hundred in Ireland should be chosen from time to time by seniority," and accordingly Mr. Dinnen was elected. Robert Bruce, who had been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months. Edward Cobain, of the Dungannon circuit, was admitted on trial, and William Cooper and William Wilson of Tanderagee reserved for the foreign missions. "The examination of character," says Lanktree, "was conducted with great strictness;" the preachers being closely questioned with regard to the doctrines and discipline of Methodism, which were clearly expounded by the President. An increase of nearly four hundred was reported in the membership. In the Address to the British Conference it is said:—"In reviewing the past year innumerable incentives to

gratitude and devout affection crowd our minds. Besides all our family and national mercies, which are not a few, the Lord has greatly blessed us in our various circuits. Many persons have been enabled, through Divine grace, to rejoice in the knowledge of 'salvation, by the remission of sins,' and some to realize in their own experience, that God 'is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' The toilsome exertions of our brethren the missionaries have also been much owned of the Lord in several places, particularly the Galway and Tyrone missions; and although our increase of numbers is not so great as it was the year before, we trust that upon the whole, the last year has not been less prosperous. When we consider the state of our Societies and congregations at large, and the general temper of the people towards us, we 'lift up our eyes, and behold the fields white already to harvest.'"

As the profits of the Book-room had proved insufficient to meet the pressing financial demands of the previous year, it was resolved that each preacher should pay out of his personal income at least four pounds, to lessen the increasing Connexional debt. Thus not only was five hundred and eighty-nine pounds raised, but attention was called to the severe privations of the itinerants. A meeting was therefore held of the principal members of Society in Dublin, together with Mr. Butterworth and some friends from the country, who had come up to the Conference. Here the subject was seriously investigated, a subscription list opened, and an address prepared for publication, stating the embarrassed circumstances of the preachers and the uncomplaining spirit in which they had borne them. Mr. Keene and others entered heartily into the project, which was taken up in a similar spirit throughout the country.

During the Conference, there was an animated and protracted debate on the subject of the stations. Some discontent had arisen in connection with previous arrangements, which was no doubt increased by the financial embarrassments of the Society. But the whole subject was well ventilated, and although universal satisfaction could not be given, some improvement was made in the direction of a better distribution of the more desirable appointments. Permission was granted for the erection of pews in the galleries of new chapels, "in order to pay the debts on

such houses, and assist in carrying on the work of God." Leave was also given for the erection of ten chapels; but it was resolved that liberty should not be granted in future for the raising of subscriptions to build a preaching-house, "unless the approbation of Conference be first procured." Two resolutions were passed for the purpose of improving the finances of the Societies, urging on the people a compliance with existing and long established rules. Measures were also devised for securing increased caution on the part of the preachers in recommending candidates for the ministry; and for reviving quarterly fasts, watch-night services, and open-air preaching wherever practicable.

Much excitement having prevailed in consequence of the introduction into Parliament of Lord Sidmouth's Bill, which aimed at crushing Methodism and every form of Dissent, at a select meeting of preachers and friends, Mr. Butterworth gave an account of how the Sanballats of that day were disconcerted, and their deep-laid schemes rendered abortive. The defeat of this measure led to the holding of a meeting of the local preachers, stewards, and leaders of the Newry district, in Portadown, to deliberate on some matters which were considered important for the right administration and consolidation of Methodism. As the result a memorial was prepared for the Conference of 1812, offering several practical suggestions, most of which were subsequently adopted.

As the Irish preachers unanimously and heartily requested the re-appointment of Dr. Clarke as their president, the British Conference consented; but at the same time passed a resolution that thenceforward the President in Ireland must be one of the Hundred, and that the same minister should not be chosen two years in succession.

Soon after Conference, William Cooper went to Liverpool, where he laboured for a short time, and his deep piety and fervent zeal made a most favourable impression. He then proceeded to his appointment in the West Indies; but his promising and useful career was soon cut short. Within a year after his arrival he was seized with a fever, and became so ill that medical skill and the loving attention of friends failed to arrest the progress of the disease. With complete resignation to the Divine will,

he committed his spirit into the hands of his gracious Saviour, and passed in triumph to the home above.

Mr. Waugh was appointed for the first time to Bandon; and the strictness and self-denial of the preachers of those days may be learned from his reception. He had travelled on horseback from Milltown to Dublin, to attend the Conference; from thence he rode to Coleraine, to see his friends for a few days, and then started for his new appointment. After a week's hard riding from the extreme north to the extreme south, he arrived at Bandon late on Saturday evening, and had scarcely dismounted when the superintendent, Daniel M'Mullen, said to him, "You must go to Bengour to-morrow morning and preach at ten o'clock, and from there to Dunmanway and preach at seven o'clock in the evening." It was hard enough, but an alternative there was none. The road to Bengour was very rough, winding, and hilly. The journey thence to Dunmanway was still more crooked and uneven; but the lady of the house where he dined, probably Mrs. Welply, in a chivalrous spirit proposed accompanying him on horseback. This relieved the difficulty and weariness of the ride. It is likely that he finished the country work, before he returned to Bandon, going round by Lisbealad and Clonakilty. But Mr. Waugh had already established his reputation for zeal, fidelity, and endurance.*

Amongst the appointments on the Wicklow circuit was one at Newcastle, where the preachers had been invited by Mr. Edward Livesley, who had been awakened to a sense of his sinfulness through a sermon he had heard at Celbridge. Mr. Samuel Downing, observing the reluctance of the people to come to the house to hear the word preached, resolved to try if they would listen in the open air. Accordingly on one occasion he went to the churchyard, and, having taken his stand on a tombstone, proclaimed the message of mercy. While listening to the glad tidings of salvation, Mr. Livesley realized his personal interest in the atonement of Christ, a blessing he never lost during his subsequent protracted life. As Mr. Downing, on concluding that faithful and long remembered sermon, stated if any friend would give accommodation to himself and his horse

* *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1883, p. 563.

he would return in a fortnight and preach again for them, Mr. John Doyle, who had a large family, but was then a careless Protestant, came forward at once, and said, "Sir, come to my house; and I will take care of yourself and horse." As the result of this kind invitation, nearly all the members of the family were converted, lived holy and useful lives, and thanked God that the Methodist preacher had ever been brought to their house.*

Mr. Averell, having attended the British Conference, on his return to Ireland, proceeded to Belfast, where he was much cheered by a cordial welcome, and rejoiced to observe in the Society tokens of spiritual prosperity. He was the guest of Mr. Emerson,† with whom and his amiable family he enjoyed much happiness and Christian fellowship. The congregations were unusually large, and the Lord accompanied His word with power to the hearts of the hearers. A severe attack of illness obliged the servant of God to remain at Lambeg for several days; but though unable to travel he did not refrain from Christian work, being employed more or less every day in his ministerial labours, and on the Sabbath he preached to a large congregation in the church. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered he proceeded to Dublin, but was not long in the city until he had a relapse, which was so violent that a considerable time elapsed before he was able again to undertake a lengthened excursion.

Mr. Lanktree, with Mr. Alcorn, was stationed on the Londonderry circuit, which was then a half residence. The principal chapel was an humble structure, with offensive stables beneath the floor; while the residence afforded very limited accommodation to the two preachers' families that resided in it. The Society was neither large nor opulent, and consisted chiefly of persons who had come to reside in the city. The out fortnight was laborious, including services at Strabane, Lifford, Clady, Dergbridge, Castlefinn, Ballindrait, Buncrana, and other intervening places. Once in the quarter, each preacher changed with the missionary at Inishowen. Of this district of country, Mr. Lanktree says it was one of the most distant places in Ireland from real religion: for

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1871, pp. 72 and 104.

† Father of Sir James Emerson Tennent.

it abounded with Popery; the church and meeting people were ignorant and bigoted; the people in general were drunken and slothful, and they had short leases, with rack rents, which were paid by the proceeds of illicit distilling; yet even here were some precious witnesses for Christ, and the work of God extended greatly, especially in the neighbourhood of Strabane, where Mr. Alcorn's labours were much owned of the Lord.

This year a Mr. Thayer, who professed to be an ex-Presbyterian minister, converted to Romanism in America, issued boastful challenges to Protestants, promising to disprove either privately or publicly, anything they might allege. Ouseley wrote to him, stating his own difficulties, and requesting the proofs so loudly promised. Thayer judged it well not to reply, and this fact becoming known, he said publicly in the Catholic chapel at Limerick that Mr. Ouseley's letter was not worthy of an answer. The latter, after waiting six months, said it was hardly honourable to promise to pay on demand, and, when requested to do so, return for an answer, "I do not think it worth while to pay; it is too trifling." He therefore wrote again, pressing for a reply, but in vain. After this he expanded his letter, and published it in a large pamphlet. It arrested the attention of the community, was eagerly read by all classes, and so vaunted by the Protestants as a triumph, that Thayer never offered battle again, and his own partisans did not meet the exultations of their opponents with any counter-claim to the honours of the field. Indeed it was believed by many that the death of Thayer, which occurred not long afterward, was hastened by mortification at his defeat. However, with the majority of the Protestant population, Ouseley from this time forth became a favourite champion. His tract was, at various times, modified and enlarged, until at last it expanded into his "Old Christianity," a volume of between four and five hundred pages, to the reading of which very many useful men traced their release from Romanism.*

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 199-200.

CHAPTER XXV.

1812.

AT this period, a young man, named John Armstrong, gave indications of the fervent piety and zeal for which he was subsequently distinguished. He was born in 1788, at Kilmore, near Newtownbutler, and having obtained a sense of sins forgiven, began at once to work for Christ. There was also a Dr. Fitzpatrick of Belturbet, who was converted, and earnestly desiring the salvation of his kindred, sent for young Armstrong to consult with him on the subject. It was arranged that the doctor should invite to tea those in whom he felt so deep an interest, and as he and his friend there and then told what the Lord had done for their souls, the hearers were deeply affected, and soon afterward all brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. The hotel business, in which Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpatrick were engaged, was given up; a large class was formed in the house, and several were led to the Saviour. This proved the commencement of a blessed revival in the town; "the doctor and little John" were invited to hold meetings in all directions, and the leaders entered heartily into the good work, so that many were led to seek and obtain the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

On April 1st, 1812, a meeting of the preachers and leaders of the district was held at Clones, to consider circular letters received from Dublin and Portadown, as to raising the supplies necessary to meet the demands of the Connexion. Mr. Andrew Swanzy was chairman. A series of resolutions were adopted, expressing thanks to the friends who had met in Dublin, a lively interest in the welfare of the Connexion, and a conviction that the only remedy for the existing embarrassment was "an increase of quarterly subscriptions at the renewal of tickets, and the regular payment of the collections in use by each member, according to the ability God hath given." It was also arranged that a special

effort should be put forth to free the preachers from the load of financial care under which they had groaned for many years.

Of Mr. Ouseley at this time, we have only a few glimpses, and each illustrates the difficulties and perils of his work. One day at Roscommon, he rode into the midst of the market-place, and turned towards a dead wall which belonged to a tobacco factory, the gable-end of which abutted on the street side with a trap door, through which goods were hoisted. Having backed his horse against the wall, he took from his saddle-bags a Bible and hymn-book, when his appearance and proceedings attracted the notice of many, who formed a semicircle in front of him. Having sung a hymn, he offered earnest prayer, read some verses from the Bible, and began to address the multitude, but had not proceeded far when the trap-door overhead was opened, and some men looked out. Suddenly a large pail of tobacco-water was discharged upon the preacher by these evil doers, and the door closed. A great tumult arose, some of the crowd climbed the wall, determined to punish the perpetrators of this outrage, while others fled, so that the meeting broke up in confusion. A fortnight later, Ouseley returned with a companion, and they each addressed a large and deeply interested audience without molestation, and with much acceptance.* The man, however, who either directed or suggested the throwing of the tobacco-water, was then an extensive manufacturer, but in a few years his business so declined that he gave up and tried farming. In that he also failed, and was obliged to quit the country.†

In May, at Ennis, as Mr. Ouseley returned one night from the stable, where he had been looking after his own horse and that of Mr. Reilly, he was watched by some fellows, one of whom, taking aim at his head, threw a stone with all his force. It struck the handle of the missionary's umbrella, and having glanced off, laid open his thumb "from the tip to the joint." He calmly said, "Thank you, you have drawn my blood at last." It was proposed to pursue the assailant, but Ouseley, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer, would not hear of it. A few days subsequently, when a young carpenter was standing on a wall by the river

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 226-7.

† *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1884, p. 277.

Fergus, about to plunge in and bathe, a stone under his feet slipped, and he fell on his stomach. Inflammation set in, and in a few days he died. His comrades stated that he was the man who had aimed the stone at the head of the missionary. God says, "Do My prophets no harm."

Early in April, Mr. Averell set out on a tour to the north-east of the kingdom. At Cavan, he addressed a large and attentive congregation, upon which a gracious influence appeared to rest. At Clones, there were crowded audiences, much power accompanied the word, and many hearts were subdued before the Lord. Services in the open air were held at Portadown, Lurgan, and Tamnaghmore, a district of country in which a spirit of hearing largely prevailed, and many were turned to the Lord. At Charlemont, the evangelist spent a memorable Sabbath, nearly five hundred partook of the Lord's supper, and about fifteen hundred were present at the evening service. Four days were spent "with the loving, happy people of Coleraine," during which the servant of God not only greatly enjoyed the services and social intercourse in the town, but also meeting a large party of Christian friends at the house of Mr. Curtis, Ballysally, where he preached in the court-yard "to a multitude of attentive hearers, under a serene sky, and the smile of Heaven." At Antrim, on a Sunday he discoursed twice in the open air, and once in the chapel to large congregations, and also administered the Lord's supper. At Island Magee, there was a numerous audience, and the prospect of much good, although so few attended the parish church that services were held in it only twice a year. At Comber, Mr. Averell was cordially received by the rector, and preached in the church to an overflowing auditory. At Strangford also, there was a greater crowd than the church could contain. At Downpatrick, there were upwards of three hundred communicants at the Lord's table; and at Newry as many as could find accommodation in the chapel. Of Drogheda, the evangelist says, there was no town in the kingdom so much overrun with Popery, that had so much of the power of religion. On the Sabbath, he preached three times, and assisted at a love-feast, and it proved a blessed day to many. At Portarlington, he says, there was now for the first time a cheering prospect that God would have a cause and people in the town.

Early in June, Mr. Averell received an anonymous letter to the

following effect:—"Dear Averell,—From some intimation of thy faithfulness, I here enclose thee £100, to be laid out as thou shalt judge best upon the poorest of the missionaries in Ireland, who instruct the people in their native language. Fare thee well!" It is a valuable practical testimony from an outsider, to the success of the Irish Methodist missions at this period.

Dr. Clarke, having arrived in Dublin, preached on Sunday, June 21st, to very crowded congregations. During the following week, he visited Drogheda, where the house being too small to contain the people, he discoursed in the new market, a large square, and had about one thousand very serious hearers, among whom were some clergymen, three priests, and the chief inhabitants of the place. He says he had much liberty, and left his testimony for salvation by Christ Jesus alone. On the succeeding Sabbath, he preached again in Dublin, in Wesley and Whitefriar street chapels, and had noble audiences.

As one of the preachers was on his way to Conference, he became seriously ill, and was obliged to stop at Mountrath. A medical man being sent for, pronounced the disorder a dangerous and malignant fever. The people in whose house the poor invalid was took alarm and requested his immediate removal. Friends went and secured an empty house in a retired part of the town, and fitted it up as speedily as possible, but when about to carry him thither, the people of the neighbourhood rose in a body, and absolutely refused to permit it. Under these circumstances, he was taken to an empty outhouse, of which the holes and breaches were stopped with straw; and requiring a little water to quench his great thirst, he took it, and said, "I shall soon drink of that river, the streams of which make glad the city of God." Here he lingered alone for a few days, and then was carried to Abraham's bosom. Such was the end of John Grace, after twenty-six years spent in the Christian ministry. He was a man of great integrity, sound judgment, good abilities, and genuine piety. Though his constitution was nearly worn out, had it not been for the want of good medical advice, and the anxiety he felt on account of the family in whose house he was, in all probability his life might have been spared some years longer.

The Conference met on July 3rd. Dr. Clarke was president, and

Mr. M'Keown, secretary. Robert Cranston, a native of the county of Cavan, having been called out during the year, was received as having travelled twelve months. There was reported a decrease in the membership of 371; the total being 27,823, of whom 696 were converted Romanists.* In the Address to the British Conference, it is said:—"Amidst the innumerable difficulties which are connected with our itinerancy, and the outrages which have of late alarmed and disgraced our country, the Lord hath upheld us, the hand of Omnipotence hath saved us. In our temporal affairs we have had most serious embarrassments, and by the scarcity of provisions which affected the poor in general, we were in no small degree straitened; yet the Lord hath abounded to us in all spiritual blessings. God has signally favoured our missions, by opening new doors of usefulness. In one place† especially, a missionary has penetrated into the wildest recesses, and has had not only considerable patronage and protection, but some fruit amongst the native Irish. The Galway and Clare missions, as also the northern missions, have been greatly acknowledged of God. The Cove mission has been judged of the first moment, not only affording to the inhabitants the means of instruction, but also to the sailors and soldiers, who resort there from all parts of the world, an opportunity of hearing the word of eternal life."

A series of important resolutions were passed, with reference to certain rights and privileges of the laity, now for the first time recognised. These included that all subscriptions given to the three great Connexional Funds should be entered in the stewards' books. Bills for deficiencies in the support of the preachers were required to be signed by the circuit stewards, before being brought to the district meeting. The Conference was not to increase the salaries of preachers, or their families, without previously recommending it to the different circuits. No member to be expelled the Society, without the concurrence of a leaders' meeting, where such could be obtained; the accused member to receive a copy of the charges and the name of the accuser. Leaders and stewards not to be appointed to office, or

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1827, p. 421.

† The barony of Erris.

removed from it, without the approbation of a leaders' meeting. The stewards to be changed every two years, and the steward of every circuit to be at liberty to attend the district meeting, during the transaction of the financial business. Such was the origin of the association of ministers and laymen in the administration of certain affairs, which has since been considerably extended in its application.

A Pastoral Address to the members of the Society was adopted. In this document, there is a grateful acknowledgement of the liberal manner in which they had come forward to assist in relieving the Connexion in its financial difficulties, having subscribed upwards of £1,200; a statement is made as to how the accounts stood; and an earnest appeal given for continued and even increased liberality, especially in connection with the various well-known and established Funds, in order to meet unavoidable and growing demands.

The resolution of the previous British Conference "that the same man shall not be chosen president two years in succession," was not approved of, and its repeal unanimously requested. It was also considered absolutely necessary "for the further security of mutual confidence and well being" that the number of the Irish preachers in the Hundred should be increased to ten, "which is less than an equal proportion, and not less than we conceive indispensable." The former request does not appear to have been granted by the British Conference; but an enlarged representation in the Hundred was afforded, by increasing the number of Irish members at once to eight, and promising, as soon as convenient, to raise them to ten, "and keep up that number as far as necessary, by regularly filling up the vacancies at every ensuing Conference."

Turning our attention from legislation to other efforts of the itinerants, we find one or two striking instances of freedom from that spirit of intolerance so prevalent in the Church of Rome. Thus Mr. Reilly, having waited on a priest in Tipperary, named Keating, to solicit a subscription towards the erection of the Nenagh chapel, was received with the exclamation, "O, Reilly, you are a real Milesian! When I was at college in France, I had two fellow-students of your name, one of them is now Primate; and here I am, a poor parish priest." On learning the object of

the visit, "Indeed, asthore," said the priest, "I will give you a guinea; I could let you have the money now, but I want to see you again." A second visit was therefore paid to the kind old man, who not only redeemed his promise and wrote his name in the subscription book, but expressed a desire to read some Methodist works. Some of his flock had been awakened through the preaching of the word, which greatly alarmed his coadjutor, who came to him, and said, "There now, what will you do? Your whole parish are going after the Swaddlers! There is Mrs. K——, the most respectable woman in your flock, gone too." "And what would you have me do?" inquired the good old man. "Denounce her from the altar," replied the other. "Muisha then," said he; "I'll not denounce her or any one else; let the decent woman go where she likes." Before Mr. Reilly had an opportunity of paying another visit to this liberal-minded priest, he had passed into the world of spirits.*

Frequent reference has been made to the labours of the early Methodists among the operatives of the Liberty, Dublin. As weaving by steam power was gradually adopted, the handloom weaving became greatly reduced; many were thrown out of employment; and in fact, from this period the Liberty declined, and became a wreck of what it had been. Methodism, however, did not go down in this part of the metropolis, although trade did. This year, with the consent of Conference, a handsome chapel was erected in Cork street, at the corner of Love lane, not far from the old store in which the Wesleys had preached; and this building has proved ever since as ource of light and blessing to the neighbourhood.

A chapel was also build in Clonakilty, chiefly through the influence and efforts of Mr. John Bennett, who had settled in the town some seven years previously, and at once heartily identified himself with the Society. Through the Divine blessing on his labours the cause had so prospered as to render the erection of such a house necessary. For a period of no less than twenty-seven years this devoted man preached at least twice, each Sunday to the congregation here; and that with much acceptance and success, laying the foundation of a permanent and prosperous cause. He died in 1832, aged fifty-three years.

* Memorial of Ouseley, pp. 194-95.

About this period, a young man named Simon Armstrong of Hollymount, was converted, through the Divine blessing on the influence of his maternal uncle, Mr. David Campbell, and at once joined the Society. He subsequently rose to a position of considerable influence, as a magistrate of the counties of Leitrim and Fermanagh, a member of the Grand Jury, and a High Sheriff, yet maintained through life his piety, and cordial attachment to Methodism, labouring for many years, more especially as a local preacher, with fidelity and success.*

In October, Mr. Averell set out on a tour to the south. At Birr, there was an unusually large congregation, much gracious feeling, and ground of hope for a revival in the town and neighbourhood. Two days were spent at Borrisokane with Mr. Ouseley, and each of the evangelists preached several times, both within doors, and in the open air, to immense crowds. They then went to Portumna, but finding none in the town anxious to hear, and a violent mob ready for action, the servants of God thought it better to go on to Clonrush, where were some Protestant families, most of whom attended the service, and some gave cheering evidence that they would bring forth fruit to the glory of God. At Mountshannon, there was a numerous audience; six persons realized peace and joy in believing, and thirteen joined the Society. At Ennis, there were good congregations, great power accompanied the word, and, while many cried aloud for mercy, five souls were set at liberty. A social tea-meeting was also held, at which about sixty were present; there was a conversation on Christian experience, and this was followed by a prayer-meeting, at which six penitents were enabled to rejoice in the pardoning mercy of God. At Gort, where there was a lively society of about twenty, the attendance at the preaching-service was good, considering the small number of Protestants in the town. And in Galway, some fruit was gathered, with a prospect of more.

In December Mr. Ouseley, accompanied by Mr. Reilly, set out on a tour through Connaught, and after having preached at Birr two or three times, and at Eyrecourt, they proceeded to Killimor, the residence of Mr. Hardy. Here a tall, intelligent priest, named Glin, joined the company; and finding two

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1860, pp. 158-62.

Methodist preachers present, said it would be well to have a convention from all the states of Christendom to settle the faith of the world, and not allow every tinker or tailor who pleased to set up and interpret the Word of God. The challenge thus thrown out was promptly accepted by Ouseley, who, with characteristic ability, proceeded to show and prove in a debate of two hours the various errors of the Church of Rome. Next morning the priest called at the house, and said to a son of Mr. Hardy, "Why, Master James, these Methodist preachers are queer fellows. I did not think they were such men." "But what did you think of your own argument?" inquired the young gentleman. "If it were not for a bit of bread," said the priest, "I would never celebrate mass again as long as I live."

Thence the missionaries went to Loughrea, and as they approached their destination, with the intention of preaching in the market, Ouseley suddenly reined up his horse, and said, "I feel as if the atmosphere were crowded with devils. We'll be attacked in the town." Before entering, he therefore rode to the house of a magistrate to ask for protection, but the gentleman was not at home. Meeting a sergeant in the army, he requested him to accompany them through the street, which was so crowded that they were obliged to ride single file. A hideous yell soon arose, which in an Irish mob means blood; and execrations followed by missiles, were hurled against the missionaries. At length the guard-house was reached, and Ouseley halted, and faced the crowd. They pelted him with whatever came to hand, till the sentry, being struck with a big cabbage, levelled his musket, and the crowd flinched. The fellow who hit the soldier was caught, and the missionaries rode off unhurt; but the mob attacked the guard-house, and would have torn it down had not their comrade been liberated.

At Tuam, Ouseley preached in the street without interruption, and Reilly in the chapel; but at Castlebar there was a little opposition out of doors, which was soon put down by a magistrate. Here they learned by a letter from the county of Clare, that the house of a gentleman there, who had become a Protestant, after hearing Mr. Ouseley, had been set on fire, and burned, farmyard and all, while it was with the utmost difficulty he and his family escaped, destitute of everything except the clothes

they wore. At Newport, an attempt to preach was defeated by the violence of the mob. In Westport, while Ouseley addressed a crowd in the market, he was assailed by a priest named Judge, who also instigated another man to strike the missionary with a hard black peat, rendered all the harder by being frozen, which almost knocked him down, and left a severe bruise on the side of his face. All the rest of the people, however, were quiet if not friendly.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1813.

DURING the closing services of the year 1812, the Lord began to revive His work on the Boylagh mission, particularly at Ballyederlan or St. John's Point, where the people met in the house of Mr. Isaac M'Neely. Many were born of God, including Miss Eliza M'Neely and Mr. Corscadden, who long lived to work for the Lord and Methodism in this country. At a meeting held by Mr. Hazleton in February, 1813, the Spirit of God descended in such power that a general cry for mercy arose in the congregation, and several were brought into gospel liberty. Most of the men of the place at the time were out fishing, a storm arose, and forty-two were drowned; but such was the mercy of the Lord that every member of the Society was preserved. The people saw and acknowledged the hand of God in this, and thus were led to attend the services in such large numbers that no house could contain them. The Lord in a special manner took the work into His own hands. Some He alarmed by dreams, others by His judgments, and many by the preaching of the word. The people thought it strange for a service to be held at which some were not brought from darkness into light.* Here a class was formed of thirty-four members, one of whom was a school-master, who had been saved from the darkness and thralldom of Popery.

At Maas, the Society now numbered fifty-two, and the meetings in general were specially profitable. The houses in which the services were held, though formerly large enough for dancing, and other scenes of dissipation, were found too small to contain the people who desired to worship God, so a new chapel was at once started, to which subscriptions were given

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1813, pp. 555-56.

- with surprising liberality. At the Rosses, a marked reformation had taken place, and considerable congregations attended the services. On Rutland island, the missionaries were hospitably received by Mrs. Finley, who having obtained the knowledge of salvation, endeavoured much to bring others to possess like precious faith. At Naran, long notorious for its moral and spiritual darkness, the gospel trumpet was faithfully sounded; and thus where cursing, swearing, and drunkenness had abounded the praises of Emmanuel were sung. At Tully More, a mountain in the midst of mountains, the Lord raised up a few witnesses for the truth, including the leader—a miracle of grace. He had been a wild, dissipated spendthrift, but became a most humble and devoted Christian. And at Loughros Point, a class of twenty-four members was formed. Thus the Lord caused “the wilderness and solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.”*

In the west, Mr. Ouseley continued his self-denying labours, and although he preached in almost every town in Connaught, and in the most public places, was not called to endure much persecution. At Ballina, there was flung at him a large potato, which hit Mr. Bruce, who stood by his side. Then a man deliberately took aim with stones, that another supplied. One of these missiles passed under the arm of the missionary, and broke a window of the house before which he was standing. Both the miscreants were seized, and placed in the bridewell. On being let out on bail, one absconded; but the other stood his trial, and was sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

In company with Bruce, Ouseley proceeded through the wilds of Erris. At the residence of Major. Bingham, Bingham Castle, they remained for three days, and preached repeatedly, besides engaging in personal and private efforts for the benefit of all in the house. On the Sunday, the missionaries went on to Binghamstown, where they found a number of people strolling on the shore, or standing in groups. With his gallant host on one side, and Mr. Bruce on the other, Ouseley commenced singing an Irish hymn; the people assembled, and when he addressed them in their own tongue, attention was fixed; and after a while,

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1814, p. 159.

tears began to roll, and sobs to be heard. Then out came Priest Jordan from the shebeen-house, where he had been taking his grog, and brandishing a stick, endeavoured to drive the people away. The preacher remonstrated, and a desultory discussion followed. Jordan soon relinquished this contest, and again applied himself to the stick. "Do not be surprised, my good people," said Ouseley, "at what he is doing. He has sworn on the holy evangelists to prevent you from hearing me." The priest denied this, and added he was doing his duty. "Oh!" said the missionary, "you need not tell me; I know your oath as well as you do yourself." Then drawing a book out of his pocket, he read, no doubt, the *Forma Juramenti*, appointed after the Council of Trent; and to the annoyance of Jordan, translated it into both English and Irish. Mr. O'Donnell, a Roman Catholic gentleman, who had previously heard Mr. Bruce, cried out, "We must hear what the gentleman has to say; and will wait to hear for ourselves." "Go home," said the priest, "you have heard mass and that is enough for you." The Major then suggested a movement across a little stream, from the other side of which Ouseley continued to preach, while Jordan beat an old kettle to drown his voice, in which he was assisted by an itinerant tinker. Among those present stood a young man named John Feely, then a zealous Romanist and a student for the priesthood; of whom more again.

Returning from Erris, Ouseley again met Reilly, and they proceeded together to Sligo, Boyle, Carrick-on-Shannon, Ballinamore, Mohill, Strokestown, Elphin, Roscommon, Castlereagh, and even some parts of the county of Cavan, visiting *en route* the clergy and gentry, and in almost every instance meeting with a cordial reception. Mr. Reilly says he had reason to believe that these visits were not only gratifying but profitable, as were also the public ministrations of the devoted evangelist.

Cheering reports of spiritual prosperity were furnished by several of the missionaries in the south. Thus Mr. Phillips writes from Cove, that the Lord had done great things there. When Methodism was introduced to the town, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, and debauchery were practised without shame or fear, as there were scarcely any who regarded the law of God. But now the scene was altogether changed, many inquired the way

to Zion, and prejudices were so removed, that nearly all the Protestants in the place attended the Wesleyan chapel, crowding it every Sabbath. There was a blessed work of awakening among the soldiers, in addition to whom forty of the townspeople were members of Society. Several interesting conversions from Romanism also took place. One of those thus led to the knowledge of the truth, on being visited by the priest, who endeavoured to persuade him to return to the Church of his fathers, replied, "While I was a drunkard, swearer, and the like, you never told me of the evil of such a course; and I am resolved where I found Christ, there to abide." The Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese threatened him with the anathemas of the Church, but all to no purpose. Another of these converts, on his death-bed expressed his firm confidence in Christ alone, and joyful hope through grace of immortality. Among his last words were:—"Jesus is mine, for ever mine." "Jesus, Thou art all Love." "Infinite mercy! Saved at the last!" The Romanists present were deeply impressed when the end came, and exclaimed with amazement: "He is gone to heaven without the priest!"*

At the last Conference permission was given for the erection of a new chapel in Limerick. For about fifty years a building had been in use, near the old court-house, and had become unequal to the requirements of the Society, so a bold effort was made, resulting in the completion of a large and beautiful house, in George's street. It was opened by Mr. Samuel Wood, and from that time until now has been regularly used, its pulpit being occupied from time to time by some of the most eminent ministers in the Connexion.

For some eleven years at least, the Society in Omagh had in contemplation the erection of a chapel, which was now at length completed, chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Gabriel Cather, son of Mr. Robert Cather of Carnony. A suitable site was granted by Samuel Galbraith, Esq., at an annual rent, that was subsequently remitted. Although Mr. Cather shrunk from public office, he took a lively interest in every measure calculated to benefit his fellow-creatures, and gave it his hearty support. He was one of the first in the town to

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1814, p. 638.

advocate the opening of a depository for the sale of bibles and religious tracts. One of his greatest gratifications arose from Sunday school work : for in addition to superintending for many years a large and efficient school in Omagh, he was in the habit of visiting others in the surrounding country, and corresponding with the Sunday School Society on their behalf. He also co-operated with his fellow-townsmen in their efforts to supply the wants of the poor and destitute, especially in seasons of dearth ; and thus realized the truth of the Lord's assurance, " It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

The Society at Donaghadee, for some years, had consisted of persons in humble circumstances, but of deep and consistent piety. At length they were joined by a Miss Smith, a lady of some influence, who had come to the services, and thus been led to give her heart to the Saviour. Having occasion subsequently to visit Lisburn, she called on Mrs. Gayer, Derryaghy, who inquired how the work of God prospered in the town ; and being informed that the Society was poor, and their place of worship a little barn, gave her five guineas, saying, " Take this, and commence to build a house for the worship of God." Other friends, thus encouraged, added their contributions, and on her return home Miss Smith had thirty guineas. Mr. Steele, the superintendent of the circuit, undertook to collect the remainder of the needed funds ; and thus the first Methodist chapel was erected in Donaghadee.

Dr. Coke paid this year his twenty-seventh and final visit to Ireland. Of his tour through the provinces, the only record available has reference to Carlow, where his reception by certain parties was not what it ought to have been. Three or four persons, from whom something better might have been expected, raised a mob of " certain lewd fellows of the baser sort," with whom they entered the Methodist chapel during service. One of the " gentlemen " called out to the doctor to come down from the pulpit, for which he was quietly but firmly reprov'd. The ring-leaders and their associates then rose to attack the preacher ; but the members of the congregation, male and female, quickly rushed forward, surrounded the pulpit, and effectually shielded the

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1839, pp. 675-76.

servant of God. Subsequently informations were lodged against the chief rioters, two of whom absconded, and the third pleaded guilty. The judge, while he dealt leniently with the accused, spoke with such force and earnestness on the nature and extent of religious toleration allowed by the law, as made a deep and general impression, which did not soon pass away. The sons of Belial, who flourished their knives in the market-place, offering "five pounds for the head of a Swaddler," were seen no more; and of the fugitives from justice, concerning whom the judge had declared that if amenable their punishment would have been severe, one was found dead in a well not long afterward, and the other never more heard of.*

The Conference met on July 2nd, and proved an occasion of unusual interest and blessing. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. Banks, secretary. John Campbell, of the Newry circuit, and Robert Masaroon, who had been called into the work during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months; and Alexander Stewart from Emyvale, was admitted on trial. One preacher had died, John Wilson sen., a deeply pious, simple-hearted, and affectionate man, who had travelled more than twelve years, and whose end was one of holy and triumphant joy.

Notwithstanding that there was reported an increase in the membership of nine hundred and forty-seven, it was considered that the success of the Society in recent years was not equal to what it had been previously, and therefore a committee was appointed "to trace the causes of unsuccessfulness, and ascertain the hindrances which obstructed the good work." The result of these inquiries having been reported, a conversation took place on the best means of obtaining a revival. Mr. Wood spoke at length and well on the qualifications necessary for the Christian ministry, urging the importance of diligent and faithful study. Mr. Ferguson dwelt on attention to discipline, especially with regard to appointments, social intercourse, and class and band meetings. Mr. Tobias then with characteristic fervour enforced the necessity of a conscious and habitual sense of the presence of God in order to successful Christian work. These addresses were accompanied with an overwhelming and unprecedented manifes-

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1869, p. 16.

tation of Divine power; and their substance embodied in a series of resolutions, published in the Minutes. John Nelson, who was present, writes, "Never was God more eminently near to us. I heard some of the oldest preachers say they never saw such a time. While Mr. Tobias prayed my body shook, my eyes streamed, and my heart said, 'Here, Lord, I give myself to Thee. 'Tis all I can do.' Surely this hour will be remembered for ever."* The public meetings were also seasons of unwonted spiritual blessing, especially the ordination service, and the Conference love-feast, now for the first time noted.

The heart of Dr. Coke was full of the claims and prospects of the grandest of his missions, that to India; and with intense earnestness and impressiveness he brought the subject before the preachers, inquiring who would come forward and engage in the sacred enterprise. Mr. Ouseley offered himself, and with tears urged his brethren to send him; but they judged he had already found his sphere in the land of his nativity, from which he could not be spared. The offer, however, of Messrs. Lynch and Erskine was accepted; and it was arranged that auxiliary societies should be formed throughout the country to raise subscriptions for the missions. The doctor completed his staff of missionaries at the ensuing British Conference, and in December sailed for Ceylon; but during the voyage it pleased the All-wise Disposer of events to take him to his eternal reward. The case of the other missionaries, thus deprived of their head, excited deep and widespread interest; and, as far as human power could aid them, every facility was afforded in the prosecution of their mission, which was crowned with much success.

During the course of the summer, there was converted a man named William Feckman, who subsequently proved one of the most successful lay evangelists Irish Methodism has produced. Born in the county of Wexford, in 1780, early in life he removed with his mother to Cork, where he lived in very humble circumstances. In availing himself with others of the permission of Mr. Marks, an architect and builder, to take water from the pump in his yard, young Feckman attracted the attention of Mrs. Marks, and received from her numerous little favours. At length one

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1877, p 255.

day, Mrs. Feckman called on Mrs. Marks and said, as she had been so kind to her son, she took the liberty of asking as a further favour, a piece of money necessary to obtain a letter lying in the post-office. The request was promptly granted, and the recipient returned with the epistle to ask that it might be read for her. It proved to be from a lawyer in Dublin, stating that there was left to her an estate worth £1,000 per annum, which on certain terms he would secure for her; but she must come to the metropolis without delay. Having been rigged out by her kind friend, who had no little difficulty in inducing her to put on a bonnet, not being in the habit of wearing anything of the kind, Mrs. Feckman, with her son, proceeded to Dublin, and in time obtained this valuable property, heavily encumbered, however, by protracted and expensive litigation.

On the death of his mother, the estate came into the hands of William, who no sooner became his own master, than he entered upon a wild and extravagant course of reckless speculation, sinful pleasure, and sensual indulgence, during which, as he himself often said, for eighteen years he never went to bed sober. The crash came, the property was seized to meet the demands of creditors, and Feckman was again thrown upon the world. In his distress and adversity he came into contact with some of the Methodists of Enniscorthy, where he heard Mr. Andrew Taylor and Captain Hawtrey preach, and was awakened to deep and increasing concern for the salvation of his soul. After some time his distress became so great, that one day he fell to the ground as one dead. On regaining consciousness, he entered his room, locked the door, and earnestly besought the Lord to have mercy on him. Having continued wrestling with God for about two hours, he was about to give up in despair, when it was whispered to his soul, "You have not asked for the sake of Jesus;" so he again knelt down and cried, "O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ who died for my sins, have mercy on me." That moment his chains fell off, the glory of the Lord filled his soul, and the Holy Spirit testified to his adoption into the family of Heaven.

A man of such an ardent disposition could not remain inactive, and therefore at once the inquiry of his heart was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The subject occupied his thoughts both asleep and awake, and before long the answer came in a

dream, in which he saw the Saviour, who commanded him to preach the Gospel. He was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but at once entered upon a course of evangelistic work, which has proved an incalculable blessing to thousands, especially in the midland counties and south of Ireland. His first field of Christian effort was among his former companions in sin, some of whom, as he told what the Lord had done for his soul, mocked, while others received the word with joy. He then began to hold meetings in farmhouses, through the surrounding country, which were owned of God. To many of these meetings he was accompanied by a young man named Edward Rigley, who rendered him valuable assistance, and subsequently, for nearly forty years, laboured with great acceptance and success, in connection with the London City Mission.*

In the spring of 1807, there was a very blessed religious awakening at Coolafancy, in the county of Wicklow. Amongst the many then converted, who became members of Society, and subsequently rendered important service to the cause of Christ, were Messrs. S. Sleator, Thomas Morres, and John Buttle. There were raised up in the neighbourhood about half a score of zealous leaders, who travelled the country in all directions, to proclaim the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins; and the Lord crowned their labours with great success, new societies were formed, and many persons opened their houses to the preachers. Soon the congregations became too large for private dwellings, and even barns could not afford the needed accommodation, so that there was a general desire for the erection of a chapel. At length the friends purchased a large two-story building, which was soon transformed into a commodious preaching-house. It was this year dedicated to the worship and service of God, and became the spiritual birthplace of many souls.†

In the autumn, the Rev. Thomas Roberts, A.M., visited Ireland, which he had been the more anxious to do on account of the shortness of a trip he made to this country five years previously, and his indisposition during most of the time he was

* *Irish Christian Advocate*, 1883, pp. 739 and 778.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1842, pp. 348-64.

here. This visit he prolonged with great acceptance to the people, and much satisfaction and profit to himself. He commenced what might be called a year on the Dublin circuit, on September 19th, by preaching in Whitefriar street chapel from 1 John i. 3, and the following Lord's day in Wesley chapel, on "Devout Solitude for a Revival of Religion," from Habakkuk iii. 2. Winter coming on with more than usual rigour, he was prevented from making those excursions into the country which he had intended; but he had ample opportunities for preaching in the chapels of the metropolis, as well as lecturing in the house of his brother-in-law and host, Mr. Guinness.

One of the local preachers in Dublin, having a deep impression that the Lord had a work for him to do in Swords, accompanied by one or two others, visited the town, and put up at a public house. Here they made inquiries as to the religious condition of the neighbourhood, and were informed that there was at least one family in which the Bible was read, that of John Green on the hill. So the servants of God proceeded thither, and saw first, one of the daughters, who at the very time of their arrival was engaged in prayer for a blessing. The other members of the family soon assembled; and the visitors having requested permission to hold a meeting in the house, Mrs. Green objected on the ground that they would probably expose themselves to the violence of the rabble, as had been the case in another house in the town, where Wesley had preached twenty-four years previously; but at the urgent request of her daughters, she was induced to withdraw her opposition. Accordingly, a small company assembled, to whom was preached a sermon from the text, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Everything about this meeting was as novel and striking to the congregation, as its results were permanent and blessed. One of those present says, "The singing entranced us all, and we thought the text, sermon, and all were made on purpose for us." Thenceforward the house was open for the messengers of the Gospel; and He whose blessing rested upon the house of Obadedom, caused it also to abide on Mr. Green and his family.*

* *Heroines of Methodism*, pp. 196-97.

Methodism, however, did not obtain a footing in the town, without more than one hard struggle. Messrs. M'Cord and Reilly in attempting to hold a service in the open air, were surrounded by a number of roughs, who endeavoured in every way they could to prevent anything of the kind. One fellow, with more courage than prudence, put his shoulder to the hip of Mr. Reilly's mare, to force her from her position, and not only failed, but well-nigh suffered severely for his temerity. The curate of the parish, the Rev. Mr. Wallace, interfered on behalf of the preachers, but was soon besmeared with mud and rotten eggs, and gave up in despair, saying, "I can do no more, gentlemen; you may as well desist." They were, however, of sterner stuff, and appear to have held their ground and carried out their purpose.*

Mr. Lanktree was stationed on the Coleraine circuit, and says that after a few months he observed an increased spirit of love and zeal among the people, the congregations became larger, and Divine power attended the ministry of the word, so that souls were converted, members added to the Society, and several new openings for preaching obtained. In addition to the labours of the circuit ministers, the occasional visits of Mr. Noble the missionary, and the exertions of John Hill, whom the Lord had thrust out to preach the Gospel, contributed much to the general prosperity. The leaders and local preachers also formed a most efficient band of auxiliaries, who laboured heartily to promote the glory of God in the salvation of souls. Nor were "honourable women" lacking to extend the cause, especially in the parish of Billy, where female prayer-meetings were held. The spirit of unity, faith, and prayer, was generally cherished, and a spring-tide of life and salvation overflowed the circuit. On many occasions, the rocks and hills of Antrim resounded with the praises of Zion's King, as the people assembled in their field-meetings, or with grateful hearts returned from the means of grace to their homes.

* Unpublished MSS. in the hands of the Rev. J. W. M'Kay, D.D.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1814.

MR. OUSELEY was appointed at the last Conference to the Antrim and Londonderry mission, with Mr. Noble as his colleague ; but extended his labours far beyond the bounds prescribed, "having resolved to take the kingdom at large." Thus we find him one Sunday at Enniscorthy, where, having preached in the chapel at ten o'clock, he went to church, and when service was over, took his stand in the street and read a hymn first in English and then in Irish. A crowd soon collected, all noise ceased, and the people remained until the Benediction was pronounced. The text was Acts x. 34, 35, and "the sermon was short but pithy, with a modest touch of controversy." Half the audience were Romanists.

On another occasion, we have a glance at the veteran missionary in the north, jogging along the road with Mr. Deery, until they heard the voices of some girls singing, and through an open doorway saw them scutching flax. Ouseley, pulling up at once, said, "Brother Deery, there's work for us here ; take hold of my reins ;" and, quickly alighting, entered the house, saying, "God save you, children." "Save you kindly, sir," was the cheerful response. "What is this you're doing?" "Scutching flax, sir." "Scutching flax ! what's that for?" "Ah, don't you know what flax is, sir? Sure, it's what your shirt is made of." "What my shirt is made of! How can that be?" "Don't you see, sir?" said one of the elder girls, holding up a strick or bunch of flax, which had been partially scutched, and showing Mr. Ouseley the fibre ; "that's what we spin into yarn, and the weavers make the yarn into the kind of cloth your shirt is made of." "Oh, I see, I see !" said Mr. Ouseley ; "thank you, my dear. And what is all this lying about the floor?" pointing to the chaff which lay at the feet of the workers. "Them's the shows, sir." "Shows, my dear ! and what will you make of them?" "Make of them,

sir!" and there was a little laugh among the girls; "why, nobody could make anything of them." "And weren't they a part of the flax a while ago?" asked he. "To be sure, sir; but they're good for nothing now, except to be burnt; and a bad fire they make." "Oh, I understand, I understand," said the preacher; and then very solemnly added, "And, children, dear, just so will the Lord Jesus Christ come one day, with all His holy angels, and He will scutch the world, and He will gather together all that is good, every one that is fit for His kingdom, and take them to Himself; and the rest—the shows, the chaff—He will cast into unquenchable fire." "The Lord save us!" was whispered round. "Amen!" said the missionary; "let us pray." All were promptly on their knees, while Mr. Ouseley in fervent petitions pleaded for the salvation of the young workers. Rising up, he blessed them in the name of the Lord, mounted his horse, and rode away, leaving them hardly sure that an angel had not visited them.*

During spring, the Society in Lisburn sustained a serious loss in the death of Mrs. Gayer, who had been long one of its most generous and devoted members. The last Sunday but one before her end, she called the members of her class around her, and earnestly exhorted them, when she was gone, to continue to love Christ and His cause, and one another. In giving directions concerning her funeral, she desired that no unnecessary expense should be incurred, so that all that could be spared might be given to the poor. A short time before she died, she fervently urged on some young friends who were in her room the necessity of immediate decision for God, adding: "What should I do now, if I had the work of my salvation to begin?" She then desired to be raised, and sang with a clear and distinct voice:

"I have fought my way through:
I have finish'd the work Thou didst give me to do."

These were her last intelligible words. For several hours she lay without moving, and then her ransomed spirit entered into endless felicity and glory.

At this season, the Rev. Thomas Roberts made a brief tour through the midland counties, during which he visited Tullamore,

* Arthur's Life of Ouseley, pp. 165-67.

Athlone, and Moate, at the first of which he opened a new preaching-house, and assisted in the formation of a missionary society for the district. He also went to Drogheda, where he conducted the opening service of another new chapel, and took a leading part in a public missionary meeting.

On May 5th, a large congregation assembled in Whitefriar street chapel. Arthur Keene, Esq., was called to the chair, and no less than fourteen distinct resolutions were proposed, seconded, and adopted, by which a missionary society for the Dublin district was formed. Amongst the chief speakers were the Rev. T. Roberts, Dr. D'Olier, Messrs. Ferguson, Mayne, Andrew Hamilton, jun., John Stuart, and Bennett Dugdale. The history and success of missionary operations, from the time of the first proclamation of the Gospel, were briefly traced; the origin and progress of Methodism, its introduction to Ireland, and its labours for the salvation of perishing souls both at home and abroad, were enlarged upon; and the claims of the heathen earnestly and eloquently enforced.* This district association was subsequently merged into the Hibernian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, which has rendered such invaluable service to the cause of Christ during the last seventy years.

During the period to which our attention is directed, the Lord poured out abundantly a spirit of awakening in the neighbourhood of Brookeborough, and many were thus led to a saving knowledge of the truth. Mr. William Herbert of Moybane entered very heartily into this gracious work, holding meetings daily; and his labours were greatly blessed. Amongst the large number converted then was James Maguire of Claraghy, who for twenty-six years subsequently gave unmistakable evidence of the truth and reality of his religion by a consistent and devoted life.†

The Conference met on July 1st. Dr. Clarke had been appointed to preside; but being unable to attend, Mr. Averell was voted into the chair, and Mr. William Stewart was appointed secretary. John M'Kenny and Daniel M'Collom of Coleraine,

—* For a full report of this meeting see the *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1814, pp. 328, etc.

† *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1841, pp. 350-54.

and William Pollock of Manorhamilton, who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months; Francis Stephens from Swanlinbar, and William Cornwall were admitted on trial. Two preachers had died,—William Peacock, who had laboured for nine years with great zeal, fidelity, and success; and Matthias Joyce, “an Israelite indeed in whom was no guile.” There was reported a membership of 29,388, being the largest number ever returned to the Conference, and an increase on the previous year of 618. Nearly three hundred pounds were contributed through the Connexion to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Deeply impressed with an abhorrence of the slave trade, a petition was forwarded to both Houses of Parliament for the immediate and total abolition of “that nefarious traffic in human blood.” Mr. Wood was chosen representative to the British Conference.

The most important subject, however, to which attention was directed, was the administration of the Sacraments by the preachers. From the time of Wesley, earnest and increasingly numerous requests for this were made by the Societies, great inconveniences having arisen, and sometimes severe rebukes received, through the practice of receiving the ordinances elsewhere; but there was also a very strong objection in many quarters to a course that implied separation from the Established Church. The Conference therefore was very reluctant to take so decided a step. Hence in 1792, it was considered that any such change would “have a tendency to do immense mischief to the souls committed to our care,” and a resolution was adopted not to make any alteration “till a change of circumstances renders a change in that plan so unavoidable as to justify us in the sight of God and man for making it.” In England, the agitation concerning this question was settled in 1795, after long and painful controversy, by the adoption of the Plan of Pacification; but the Irish Conference did not then deem it expedient to accept that plan. During the succeeding year, three ministers, yielding to local pressure, administered the Lord’s supper; and as a punishment for this were put back on trial. In 1803, the preachers were forbidden to “perform the office of baptism on any account;” and there is a recommendation in the Minutes of 1806 “to all our people to be constant in attending the Church and Sacrament.” Thus we see

the pressure the Conference felt year by year from those who wished for the ordinances, and its unwillingness to yield to their repeated and earnest solicitations; although the preachers never seem to have doubted their right to do so, if such a course were judged expedient. Notwithstanding great hostility to any change, the desire for the ordinances continued to increase and spread, both among preachers and people, until it assumed a strength that could neither be ignored or crushed.

At the Conference this year, petitions were presented from several circuits, stating that they had been for many years deprived of the Lord's supper, and praying that provision might be made for their receiving it from the hands of their own preachers. It was therefore proposed, "That the request of the petitioners be now granted; and that from henceforth we will administer the ordinances of the Gospel to such of our Societies as require them." The discussion of this motion occupied the greater part of a day, and was accompanied with a gracious sense of the presence and power of the Spirit. Previous to the vote being taken, an earnest appeal was made to the throne of grace for Divine direction, and the resolution was then carried by a majority of ten, which was regarded by the advocates of the change as settling the question. On the following morning, however, the minority proposed, "That the operation of the vote of our last sitting be suspended for one year, and a conciliatory letter sent to those circuits which petitioned for the ordinances." After a very earnest debate, this resolution, from its apparent moderation, was carried. Had the request of the petitioners been promptly granted, but in the first instance only under such conditions as were required two years later, it is exceedingly probable that Irish Methodism would have been saved from the most painful and trying ordeal that it has ever passed through. But to resolve that the ordinances should be dispensed to any who required them was a change in the constitution of the Society so complete and general, as could not fail to excite the hostility of those who were the friends of Methodism simply as an evangelistic organization; while to postpone the operation of this resolution was to satisfy neither its supporters or opponents, and to afford to each an opportunity and encouragement for agitation, which they were not slow to seize.

Before dwelling on the sad results of the course adopted by the

Conference, we must notice some work done for Christ of a more pleasing and hopeful character. The Rev. Thomas Roberts made an excursion to the south and west, where his labours were gratefully appreciated. He expresses the pleasure he felt in meeting again some of his old friends in the city of Cork, many of them having joined "the general assembly and Church of the firstborn which are written in heaven." Having also visited Killarney and Limerick, he came back to Dublin, where, on September 18th, he preached his farewell sermon from Philippians i. 27, and then returned to England.

Mr. Reilly was appointed to Dublin, and he describes the state of the Society there as one that "would vie with the epoch of Hester Anne Rogers." The north and the south of the city were very distinct in their associations, with Wesley chapel and Whitefriar street respectively, as their headquarters. The former Society especially included many persons of intelligence, refinement, and devoted piety, with whom it was no ordinary privilege to be connected. Several gentlemen of piety and influence visited the quondam Irish missionary, to ascertain his views with regard to the religious condition of the country. Amongst others, who thus sought information on this subject, was a Mr. Abraham Mason, who had amassed a considerable fortune as an ironmonger, and subsequently bequeathed to the Conference one thousand pounds to assist in the education of young men for the Irish mission.*

At about this period a good man, named Armour Frazer, was appointed teacher of the parochial school of Hockley, near Richhill, a village proverbial for its wickedness. The school was opened each day with prayer, which so amused one of the boys that he burst into loud laughter; but not long afterward, while carting on the Sabbath, he met with an accident, and was thus hurried into eternity. Mr. Frazer soon commenced a society class, which increased until there were in attendance about twenty members, consisting chiefly of his own pupils. One Sunday morning, the Rev. Silver Oliver, rector of Loughgall and patron of the school, met the teacher and inquired where he had been. "I was at class-meeting," replied Frazer. "You ought," said the rector, "to have

* Unpublished MSS. in the hands of the Rev. J. W. M'Kay, D.D.

been at the Sunday-school." "Oh, your reverence," answered Armour, "I am quite in time for the school, as it is not yet the hour." "At all events," continued the rector, "I cannot allow you to be running after these Methodists; and now I give you a week to consider whether you will give up class-meeting or resign my school." "I don't require a week, no nor a day, to consider the matter," replied Armour. "If I won't be allowed to attend my class, I shall resign at once." The rector, who was really a Christian gentleman, was so touched with the candour and fidelity thus displayed that he said, "Well, we shall say no more about it for the present;" and from that time forward the schoolmaster steadily rose in the favour and esteem of his patron, continued to hold his position as long as he lived, and, when he died, was interred at the expense of the rector, who desired that when he died his bones should lie "beside those of that man of God"—a wish that was faithfully attended to.

Out of the class thus formed by Armour Frazer, no less than five leaders and as many local preachers were raised up. One of the first of those who became members was a young man named William Running, who for about sixty years proved to be a devout, consistent Christian, and a faithful and generous supporter of Methodism. He was a man of great energy, vigorous mind, and mighty in prayer. No one, it is said, who heard him address the throne of grace, could easily forget his earnest and pleading importunity. While a young man, with but limited means, he was requested to give a subscription to the Worn-out Preachers' Fund, and cheerfully gave a pound—all he had—and immediately afterward an impression was made on his mind that he would never want a similar sum as long as he lived, which was fully borne out in his subsequent life.*

Mr. Andrew Taylor was appointed a missionary to Enniscorthy, where, through the Divine blessing on his labours, an extensive religious awakening took place. Amongst the fruits of his memorable ministry as "the Apostle of the county of Wexford," was a young man, named Fossey Tackaberry, for whose conversion and devoted life thousands will bless God throughout eternity. The primary objects of this youthful convert's solicitude were his

* Lynn's History of Methodism in Armagh, pp. 27-28.

kindred and friends. Like Andrew, who "first findeth his own brother Simon," young Tackaberry first induced "his own" mother to hear the word preached, a woman who subsequently became an example of every Christian virtue. Soon afterward his aunt, Mrs. R. Morris, spending an evening at Tomagaddy, was prevailed on to accompany him to hear Mr. Taylor; and that night, so clearly and powerfully did the missionary show the way of salvation, through Christ, that believing she found life in His name. Her husband was then awakened through the preaching of the word, and joined the Society. Yielding to the conviction of his sinfulness the anguish of his spirit became such that he could scarce eat or drink for days. While his devoted partner knelt by his side, and poured out her soul in an agony of prayer, the Lord Jesus was evidently set forth crucified before the poor penitent, who was thus lightened of his load of guilty woe, and enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The flame thus kindled soon spread through the whole family circle. The conversion of Mr. Tackaberry's brother John,—subsequently a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America,—of his stepfather, and of his aunts Eades and Gill of Dublin, followed in rapid succession. Mrs. Gill was induced by her friends, who had recently found the Saviour, to visit the scene of this revival, and there "deep wounded by the Spirit's sword," she said to her nephew, one day, "Fossey, I am very miserable." He proposed prayer; and before they rose from their knees, her soul was filled with unutterable peace and joy through believing. Her lot in life was one of suffering; but to the praise of all sufficient grace, she could say, "The Lord only knows the inward and outward trials I have had. Blessed be God, I do not feel or wish they had not been. Good is the will of the Lord." Her dying testimony is worthy of lasting remembrance. "At first," she said, "the Lord deeply convinced me of sin; He then soundly converted me; a little while afterward, He wholly sanctified me; ever since He has kept me; and now He is going to take me to praise Him for ever."

Mr. Tackaberry was signally owned of God as a messenger of mercy to many during the revival, which extended over the entire mission, so that multitudes of formal Protestants, and some bigoted Romanists turned to the Lord and obtained for-

givenness of sins. Classes were organized, and young men, full of faith and power, were raised up to work for their Redeemer. Other evangelical churches also were quickened into life and zeal; one instance of which, at least, is worthy of record. Mr. Hawkshaw, a gentleman of influence, having come to the neighbourhood of Enniscorthy to see some property for sale, when within a mile or two of the town, a spring of his carriage broke, and he went into a house, near the scene of the accident, to secure assistance. Here he found the Methodist preacher, surrounded by a number of children, to whom he gave religious instruction. The stranger was so deeply impressed with the value and importance of such efforts, that he said at once, if he settled there, he would open a school on the Lord's day for the instruction of the young in the Word of God. He did secure the property, and also carried out his resolution, thus establishing the first Sunday school in the county. Others followed his example, so that several schools were commenced, including a second in Enniscorthy, and one begun by Mr. Tackaberry at Ballycanew, where a number of the elder scholars were converted, and devoted themselves heartily to the service of God.

Mr. John Collier, of Ballynacoy, near Lisburn, in passing through the country to religious services, on the Lord's day, was grieved to see numbers of boys and girls living in ignorance and sin, and strolling about the fields with none to care for them; so the question arose in his mind, how this growing evil might be arrested. He had heard of Sunday schools, and, although he had never seen one, and was ignorant of the mode in which they were conducted, resolved, after much prayerful consideration, to organize one. This he commenced on his own premises, and with a success that exceeded his highest expectations. Young persons, attracted partly by the novelty of the thing, and partly by the allurements of gratuitous instruction, crowded the place, and displayed an amount of ignorance of which he had no conception previously; yet by diligent and patient effort they were taught to read the Scriptures; and within two years a marked change was apparent in the moral state of the neighbourhood. Attention was thus directed to the benevolent project, assistance as teachers was offered by several respectable persons, and as the place of meeting became too small for the numbers who

desired to be present, a more suitable building was secured and fitted up for the purpose. It is impossible to estimate the good done by this school to both parents and children, more especially in the subsequent ten or twelve years.*

We pause here to notice briefly one of the many instances of the influence for good exercised by Irish Methodism in distant parts of the earth. Just at this time there reached the Missionary Committee in London, a communication earnestly requesting the appointment of a missionary to Australia, and leading to results far more extensive and glorious than could have been anticipated by the most sanguine Christian philanthropist. It appears that Mr. E——, an Irishman, who had been educated for the Bar, in a moment of severe temptation, committed forgery, was convicted, and sentenced to death. While under condemnation he was visited by some Methodists, convinced of sin, and led to give his heart to God. Several extenuating circumstances having come to the knowledge of the Government, the sentence of the culprit was commuted to transportation, and he was therefore banished to New South Wales. Here he at once engaged in Christian work, on week days teaching a school, and on Sundays travelling through the country and conducting religious services, until at length he formed a class of six persons at Windsor. Soon afterward a second class was commenced in Sydney. These two little societies forwarded the above request, which led to the appointment of the Rev. Samuel Leigh—the first Wesleyan missionary who laboured in Australia and New Zealand,—and thus to the establishment of the large and flourishing Methodist Church in the southern world.

But turning our attention from these scenes of earnest and successful evangelistic work, and looking at the state of the Society, in general, through this country, we find that troublous times had now come. As might have been anticipated, the postponement of the dispensing of the ordinances, proved the occasion of a sad and most disastrous agitation. The public discussion of the question appears to have commenced on October 14th, in Newry, with an anonymous pamphlet, entitled “An Epistolary Address to the Methodists of Ireland, respecting their Privileges,”

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1853, p. 515.

in which the claims of the petitioners are strongly urged. This was followed by "A Letter Addressed to the Methodist Preachers of Ireland," by Mr. William Stewart, dated November 17th, and endorsed by Messrs. Ferguson, John Kerr, Andrew Hamilton, junior, and Reilly, the four other preachers then stationed in Dublin. In this document, the writer takes the ground that such a measure as that passed by the Conference implied "total separation from the Established and all other Churches, and consequently our becoming a distinct body of Dissenters," which he objects to on three grounds: first, as a departure from the original principles of the Society; secondly, as unnecessary; and thirdly, as productive of the most serious evils. Amongst the pernicious effects anticipated were the following:—estrangement among the preachers, divisions in the Society, smaller congregations, the hostility of the clergy, financial losses, and difficulty in working the itinerancy. Such may be regarded as a fair statement of the grounds taken by those who opposed any change. It does not appear that Mr. Stewart considered the administration of the Sacraments by the preachers to be in itself unlawful, but his arguments on the ground of inexpediency are put with great force. There can be little doubt that this able but ill-advised publication made a deep impression throughout the Connexion, and contributed, in no small degree, to raise that opposition, which eventually led to a complete separation in the Society.

Mr. Stewart's letter called forth numerous rejoinders, of which the first was by Mr. Crozier. A second written a month later, by Mr. Richard Price, fairly states his side of the question. Having quoted Mr. Stewart's words, that those who advocated the adoption of the new measure were originally Dissenters, the writer aptly inquires how they could separate from a Church, with which they had never been united; and then proceeds to examine in detail the objections made to the resolution of the Conference. As to departing from original principles, he replies, no change can be wrong that is in accordance with the Word of God; besides, in this matter, Wesley himself had been an innovator, and the history of Methodism, even in his life, afforded many instances of changes similar to that now desired. The necessity for the ordinances rested on the inability of certain parties in the exist-

ing state of affairs, to obey an express Divine command. While, as to the evils dreaded from the adoption of the proposal, there was no reason to apprehend some of them, others would not be so serious as anticipated; and if the worst should happen, the Lord would stand by those who adhered to the plain teaching of His Word, and did what was right. This reply must be admitted to be complete and conclusive.

While thus some of the preachers were engaged in public controversy with each other, the people joined in the contest by advocating their opinions at special meetings. The first of these was at Newry, where the stewards and leaders "came to a public resolution," to petition the Conference against making any change. Then in Dublin, on November 23rd, at a full meeting of the trustees, stewards, and leaders convened for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency or in expediency of separating from the Established Church, it was resolved unanimously: "That it is our opinion that any deviation from original Methodism, either in doctrine or discipline, as established by our late venerable founder, the Rev. John Wesley, would be highly inexpedient and injurious to the cause; and that we will abide in that way, which God has so eminently owned and blessed." A copy of this resolution was sent to the members of Society in Ireland, together with a long letter, signed by the leaders, giving as reasons for opposing any change, their belief that the call of Methodist preachers was "not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel," that in this work they had greatly prospered, and that however unpleasantly a few societies in Ireland might be placed, that was no reason why a radical change in the system should be made.

Lisburn was the next place to speak, and on December 26th, at a meeting of trustees, stewards, and leaders, the Dublin letter having been considered, it was resolved:—"(1) That those members of the Methodist Society here that have been and still are affectionately attached to the Church, as by law established, are determined to abide in that way which God has so eminently owned and blessed; (2) That those Dissenters and others amongst us, whose minds are dissatisfied for want of the ordinances administered by our own preachers, may have those ordinances, as the wisdom of the Conference may direct; and that under

existing circumstances, such a measure would relieve the minds of some of our dear and respected brethren from much painful exercise, and in our judgment promote a general union amongst us." These resolutions, framed in a truly liberal spirit, were signed by thirty-five office-bearers of the Society.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1815.

As the agitation for and against the administration of the Sacraments became more widespread and intense, the imprudence of the well-meant delay of the Conference became increasingly apparent. The whole Connexion was thrown into violent commotion. In nearly all the circuits, meetings were held and resolutions adopted, which generally were printed and scattered over the country. Thus circular letters kept passing to and fro, and on every hand little was heard but the din of controversy. The trustees, stewards, and leaders of Dublin, having recorded and published an opinion against the change, their example was soon followed by the officials of the Societies at Cork and Limerick. Waterford came next, insisting that it was a breach of trust to suffer any person to officiate in the chapels, who, by sanctioning the proposed alteration, had departed from the original plan and discipline established by Wesley. Three leaders and a number of members at Roscrea, stated, that they would not acknowledge any preacher, who unwarrantably assumed the privilege of dispensing the ordinances, nor would they belong to, or contribute to the support of any Society differing with them in this essential point of discipline. The office-bearers of the Newtownstewart circuit resolved, that they would not submit "to either a particular or general change, or any alteration whatever in our economy," and that "should the new measure be forced into execution," they were resolved not to receive or make provision for the preachers who were parties to this act. Similar resolutions were also passed at Clones, Stranorlar, Ballyshannon, and Belfast.

While thus those opposed to the resolution of the Conference strained every nerve to prevent its adoption, the advocates of

the change were not idle, although they did not put forth their full strength. Meetings of the trustees, stewards, and leaders of the Armagh, Coleraine, Roscrea, and other circuits, were held, at which the ordinances were claimed from the hands of the preachers as an inalienable right, and in no respect a deviation from original Methodism. There were also published in reply to Mr. Stewart's letter, numerous circulars, the chief of which were from Messrs. James Moore of Belfast, Deery, and Ouseley.

Instead of answering the arguments contained in these documents, the Dublin leaders culled from the writings of Wesley, and published, the different and oft repeated statements made by him against separating from the Church, but were ably answered by Mr. Steele. The former endeavoured to show that the proposed new departure was a violation of the principles by which Wesley had been governed, and on which the Society had been founded. The great error here was in supposing that a certain course which the founder of Methodism for a time deemed expedient was therefore a part of his system, and to be pursued in all subsequent years. While warmly attached to the Establishment, patiently enduring the ungenerous treatment he had received, and hoping that the policy of the Church would be altered, he admitted that his people should deviate from it in certain cases, and even set them examples of such deviations, by ordaining preachers himself, not only for Scotland and America, where the jurisdiction of the Establishment did not exist, but also for England. His whole course was one in which he implicitly followed the guidance of Providence, irrespective of his own feelings and predilections. Few reformers have more nobly broken away from the prejudices of tradition and education than John Wesley; and fewer have shown equal wisdom in introducing changes in such a way as to avoid unnecessary offence. The Conference, therefore, acted in perfect accordance with his example both in refusing the Sacraments as long as the necessity could be postponed, and in granting them, when they could no longer be denied; and only failed to follow in his footsteps by hesitating when the time for prompt action had arrived. The views of those who opposed the change were plausible but mistaken, and have no sanction in the

principles which directed the life and teaching of the founder of Methodism.

While thus the Connexion was convulsed with internal strife, and many were earnestly declaiming against a separation from the Church, it is remarkable that the only person outside Methodism, who made a public attack on the Society was a Presbyterian minister, the Rev. James Huey, of Ballywillin. At an ordination service he seized the opportunity of impressing the minds of those present with his views concerning lay preaching; and not satisfied with thus ventilating his opinions, got his sermon printed and extensively circulated. In this discourse there is a strong condemnation of all who dare to preach the Gospel, without being ordained by properly constituted authorities; and as examples of the guilt and danger of such a course, reference is made to Korah and his company, Uzzah, and Simon the sorcerer! Lay preaching, it is said, "tends to bring disgrace on the sacred office of the ministry," "threatens to introduce confusion and disorder into the Christian Church," "renders unnecessary the labours of well educated ministers," "sets at nought an academical education," and "encourages arrogance and enthusiasm." But this polemic was soon taken to task by Mr. Lanktree, who had no difficulty in exposing the unscriptural views and groundless objections of his opponent.

Notwithstanding the violent commotion which prevailed throughout the Connexion, there were tokens of the Lord's prospering blessing. Thus the good work in the county of Wexford continued to deepen and extend. One of the numerous converts was Mr. Cranwell, of Ballymoney, who, although nearly ninety years of age, had never been known to bow his knee in prayer until after he heard Mr. Taylor preach. Several of his children having been converted, the old gentleman, through their influence, was led to attend the services; on one of these occasions the pride of his heart well nigh proved his ruin. Believing that allusions were made in the sermon to his former life, and that he was thus held up to the observation of all present, he regarded it as an offence never to be forgiven. So far did he carry his resentment that he opposed his children having any further connection with the Society, and even searched the Scriptures to try and find passages against the doctrines of Methodism.

But the word spoken at that field-meeting was as a nail fastened in a sure place. Subsequently he evinced absorbing anxiety for salvation; and, deeply humbled, entreated an interest in the prayers of those whom he had opposed and hindered. His daughter, Mrs. Morris, had the honour and joy of bringing her aged father to Jesus. What were her emotions, when he said one day:—"My dear child, the Lord has stripped me of all I ever trusted in. He has showed me what I am, and where I must look. Come, Lord Jesus, I wait for Thee!" A clergyman visited him, and prescribed a tedious process of repentance, which confused and bewildered the poor penitent. "He does not understand speaking to a man in my state," was his reflection on this counsel. "Such advice might have done me good, had I heard and followed it years ago. Now I cannot do what he says, I have not time. I have no time but for one thing, to look to God through Christ." And he did look, and thus was enabled to rejoice in a conscious sense of sins forgiven with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Some of his last utterances on earth were: "All my stings of fear and remorse and guilt and shame are turned to joy and peace and love. Victory, Lord! Victory, to the Lamb of God!"

At this period, we have two glimpses at the labours of Mr. Ouseley. On one occasion we find him meeting Mr. Taylor in Enniscorthy, and preaching in the chapel and street. The soldiers were invited to the chapel, and it was so filled, that some persons had to stand outside to hear. Again we see the veteran missionary in Dublin, where he preached on Oxmantown Green; but during the service, a brewer's drayman flung a stone which struck a peace-officer. Mr. John O. Bonsall, who happened to be present, succeeded in arresting the delinquent, and two others who also endeavoured to raise a riot were seized. The prisoners, however, were discharged without trial, by the Recorder, who said the preacher was the rioter, and he would gladly have punished him. His honour also reproved the peace-officer for not having arrested Mr. Ouseley.

A small branch of the New Connexion Society still existed in Dublin. The members met in a room in Whitefriar street, behind the shop of Mr. Thomas West, an acceptable leader and local preacher, who in the spring of this year resolved to emigrate

to America. The little Society, that for years had been kept together by his exertions, and highly esteemed and loved him, felt this most keenly. The scene at parting was very touching. The members, numbering about thirty, accompanied their leader to the Pigeon-house, where he gave them his last benediction, and Mr. M'Clure commended him in prayer "to God and to the word of His grace." While thus engaged, a regiment of soldiers marched up with their commanding officer in front, who on perceiving the little group, slackened his pace, and uncovered his head. This example was followed by all the men, who in like manner passed with a slow and steady pace, and in profound silence. It was a most impressive sight, on the one side the solemn military procession, on the other the wild waves of the sea, in front the ramparts and fortifications, with sentinels passing to and fro, and in the centre a little band with bended knee and heaven directed eye, engaged in earnest prayer. On the departure of Mr. West, Mr. M'Clure continued the work, the services being held in 90, Summer hill, until the room became too small, and the Taylors' hall, Back lane, was secured, and filled to overflowing. He also preached occasionally in Ringsend and other places, and thus soon became extensively known, and much respected in the city.

About this time, Mr. Alcorn, then stationed in Newry, visited Scotland, and returning in a vessel where were a number of ladies and gentlemen engaged at cards, his spirit was stirred within him, and he proposed to vary their pleasure by singing. At once they agreed, and he sang the hymn beginning:—

" When for eternal worlds I steer,
And seas were calm and skies were clear."

The attention of all became fixed, and on concluding he was requested to sing again. Religious conversation followed, and such was the impression made, that the preacher was invited to Gosford Castle, the residence of the Earl of Gosford, by whom the court-house at Markethill was granted for religious services, which were attended by several members of his lordship's family and household. Thus good was done in the town and neighbourhood.*

* *Irish Evangelist*, 1867, p. 53.

The success of another Irishman, named John Cavanaugh, is worthy of notice. He was a local preacher, and being in the army was taken prisoner by the French, and removed to Cambray, where he remained upwards of three years, during which he faithfully preached the Gospel to his fellow prisoners. Such was the success of his labours, that a society of upwards of one hundred members was formed, and kept together until the treaty of Paris, when they returned to their own country. He was a man of genuine piety, and unaffected simplicity, observing in all his engagements the strictest punctuality and fidelity.*

At about this period, a lady was converted, who subsequently became one of the brightest ornaments of the Methodist Society. Mrs. Ismena Whittaker, born in 1785, was the daughter of Mr. Charles Benson of Collooney, and wife of Mr. George Whittaker, Sligo. From earliest years she had a certain measure of the fear of the Lord, read her Bible, attended the means of grace, and considered herself a true Christian, though engaged in the fashionable pursuits of the world. At length on one occasion, on advocating dancing, a Methodist who was present, replied, "It is written whatsoever we do we are to do all to the glory of God." These words, like an arrow, pierced her heart, arousing her to the painful consciousness that she had never acted with this sublime object in view. For some time she continued in darkness and sorrow, until one night, after her family had retired to rest, while thinking on her sinful state, she was led to kneel down and plead for mercy. Suddenly her eyes seemed to be opened, so that she saw Christ hanging on the tree, her burden of guilt fell off, and her spirit rejoiced in the Lord her Saviour. A Methodist having been the instrument of her awakening, she was led to attend the meetings of the Society, and, finding experimental religion a subject of inquiry amongst the members, and gospel simplicity in their intercourse, became one of their number. She also sold her costly finery, and devoted the proceeds to religious and charitable purposes. From that day the world was beneath her feet, and her self-denial most exemplary. Regarding all she had as from God, she gave back all to Him, and ever after lived in this spirit of complete consecration.

* *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1841, p. 411.

Mrs. Whittaker at once commenced to exercise a powerful and wide-spread influence for good, becoming in succession, Sunday school teacher, tract distributor, missionary collector, and leader. Everything seemed to contribute to her success—her beautiful appearance, refined manner, and liberal education, together with transparent purity of motive, thorough unselfishness, and surpassing Christian devotion. The decided stand for Christ she took could not fail to be made a blessing. One of the first led to the Saviour through her instrumentality, was her own sister, and others soon followed, until many came inquiring the way to Zion, and were taught the things belonging to their peace. Her cheerful, happy disposition, joined with deep piety, enabled her to commend religion to all with whom she came in contact, whether high or low, rich or poor. The only persons of title in the town, a dowager lady, and her grand-daughter became so deeply convinced of the beauty of holiness, that they attended the Methodist services, and one of them at least was truly converted, and met in class. Mrs. Whittaker was ever on the alert to do good, in which she was much aided by a keen discernment and appreciation of character. Having the pen of a ready writer, she edified a large circle of correspondents, and reached a number of persons otherwise inaccessible. The extensive and blessed results of her devoted labours, will only be known at the last day.

A meeting of the Methodist Missionary Society of the Dublin district, formed twelve months previously, was held in Whitefriar street chapel, on the evening of May 18th. Mr. John Handy of Anghrim, occupied the chair, and resolutions were passed gratefully acknowledging the success with which the Society had been favoured, expressing the imperative duty of sustaining it, and appointing the committee and office-bearers for the subsequent year. Thus an annual public missionary meeting in Dublin became an established institution.

The Conference of this year was anticipated with intense interest. The Society in general, as well as many attached friends, awaited its decision on the Sacramental question with no ordinary anxiety; and animated by a similar spirit an unusually large number of preachers assembled on July 7th—the day of meeting. The Rev. Walter Griffith was president, and Mr. Crozier,

secretary. John Jebb of Ballybay, William Richey of Carnahinny, Joseph Edgerton of Clones, William M'Kee of Newry, James Horne, and John Hill were admitted on trial.

James M'Quigg, who had rendered valuable service to the Connexion, having been charged with immorality, which he solemnly denied, was expelled. It was evidently with great reluctance the Conference came to this conclusion, but, under the circumstances, no other course could be adopted. He was an admirable Irish scholar, as well as an able and acute preacher. Inhibited from occupying the pulpit, he did not cease working for Christ, although in a less public sphere. He was the first to edit the Bible in Irish for the British and Foreign Bible Society, carrying it through two editions; and at least in the latter, collating it with Bedell's original manuscript; and while preparing a third edition for the press, he died. Subsequent to his removal to the home above, by the confession and terrible end of the party who was really guilty, the character of this good man was cleared of the foul stigma that appeared to rest on it, and his innocence fully established.

The decrease in the membership, notwithstanding the agitation of the year, was only thirty-one. In the Address to the British Conference, it is said: "Almost every year has been marked with some signal token of Divine favour; and it is a matter of thanksgiving that the last year has also been favoured with 'times of refreshing coming from the presence of the Lord.' In several circuits there has been a great enlargement of our Zion, and though from various circumstances, our increase does not appear, yet we have seen many turned 'from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' The Irish missions still continue to bless our land. Several Roman Catholics have been enlightened and turned to the Lord, and not a few careless Protestants brought to that knowledge of God, in which standeth eternal life."

Previous to the discussion of the all-absorbing subject of the administration of the Sacraments, inquiry was made into the charge of undue influence having been used by some of the preachers to obtain petitions in favour of the change; but the ministers concerned were able to vindicate their conduct completely. It was also resolved that, in order to avoid personali-

ties, the subject should be considered on the merits, apart from all letters and pamphlets, which had been published during the year. Then the petitions in favour of the ordinances, which were numerous, and couched in language at once respectful, urgent, and affectionate, were read; and afterward those of the objectors, which were still more numerous, and of a very miscellaneous character; the principal one being a remonstrance from the Dublin leaders. This document was engraved on a vast roll of parchment, and presented to the Conference by the venerable Arthur Keene, accompanied by several of the most influential office-bearers of the Society in the city. The debate was opened by Mr. Deery, who moved, "That the petitioners have their request," and was supported by Messrs. Crozier, Ouseley, Mayne, Steele, Lanktree, Bailey, and M'Cord. The following amendment was proposed by Mr. Tobias:—"That an affectionate address be written to the petitioners, stating, that however we may feel for their situation, in the present state of the Irish Connexion, we cannot grant their request. But in order to meet their necessities as far as possible, we request our brother Averell, upon application from the several circuits concerned, according to his ability and convenience, to administer to them the Sacraments." This was supported by Messrs. M'Mullen, Hamilton, junior, Averell, Thomas Brown, Banks, James Rutledge, and William Stewart, and carried by a considerable majority.

The decision thus arrived at, instead of checking the efforts made to obtain a change so ardently and generally desired, only proved a stimulus to greater exertions, and precipitated a crisis which the supporters of the resolution were anxious to avert. Immediately after the Conference concluded, an address was forwarded from the Newry circuit, signed by thirty-three brethren, remonstrating against the judgment given. In Coleraine also, a meeting was at once held, at which it was resolved to receive no preacher unless he would engage to dispense the ordinances of the Christian Church; but subsequently, on being expostulated with by Mr. Lanktree, they withdrew the resolution, and earnestly requested him, before he left the circuit, to administer the tokens of the Saviour's dying love. After fervent prayer for Divine guidance; he consented, and on August 8th, having preached to a goodly company at Ballylough, he gave to them the Lord's

supper. "It was," he says, "a season not to be forgotten, distinguished by the sacred softening influence of the Holy Spirit ; it was a spiritual Gilgal, where 'the Lord rolled away our reproach.'" Mr. Averell, on hearing of this breach of discipline, wrote at once to Lanktree's superintendent, requiring him to have the offender tried by a district meeting, and at least suspended ; but Mr. George Stephenson refused to comply, so Mr. Lanktree continued his usual course of labours.

On October 18th, a large and representative meeting of laymen was held at Armagh, to consider the best method of obtaining their religious privileges, and it was resolved to request the Lord's supper from the preachers. This resolution was signed by upwards of one hundred and sixty persons, chiefly office-bearers of the Society, amongst whom the leading men were Messrs. John Noble and Thomas Shillington. Soon after the publication of the above, several on the Belfast circuit presented a requisition to Messrs. George Stephenson and Lanktree, claiming the ordinances ; and their request was granted. The circuit preachers held a series of sacramental services commencing at Newtownards, where the chapel was crowded with communicants, and the ordinance was crowned with the presence and blessing of the Redeemer. At the Falls, Donaghadee, and Portaferry, there were similar tokens of the Divine approval. In like manner Messrs. Steele and Cranston complied with a requisition from the Armagh circuit ; as did Mr. Thomas Johnson in Newry ; and in each instance the Lord gave His enriching blessing.

On September 21st, the Hon. and Rev. Charles Knox, son of Viscount Northland, in a visitation sermon preached before the Archbishop and clergy of the diocese of Armagh, took occasion to repeat certain stale and often answered charges against the Methodists ; such as, that their meetings for Christian experience were equivalent to Popish confession and tended to mental pollution, their extemporaneous prayers were exhibitions of vanity, and their preachers proud and ambitious men artfully labouring to perpetuate their system at the expense of genuine Christianity. As this sermon was subsequently published, Mr. Steele replied in a very able pamphlet, showing how utterly base and unfounded were such representations of Methodism. Nothing daunted the Hon. and Rev. gentleman then preached at Aghnacloy, from

Jude 11, two sermons, which he afterward published, and addressed to the Methodists of Ireland. In these discourses he charged the members of the Society with separating from the Establishment, and thus being guilty of schism, and claimed for his own Church exclusively, scriptural authority for her government and apostolic power in her ministrations. Mr. Steele, however, had no difficulty in showing in reply that if by separation from the Church was meant a renunciation of her doctrines, or a refusal to join in her public worship, then the Methodists had not separated; but if it meant ceasing to attend the ministry of those who were immoral in their lives or unscriptural in their teaching, then to separate from them was for the honour of the Church and to the glory of God. That in all the New Testament there is not the slightest intimation respecting presbyters as forming an order distinct from that of bishops. And that the clergy of the Established Church had no exclusive power or authority, but what was derived from the civil government. Thus the controversy ended.

Two years previous to this, Miss Cambridge had relinquished all secular business, and given herself entirely to the Lord's work. It is unnecessary to follow in detail her indefatigable labours, which extended over a further period of about fifteen years, and included in their sphere almost every county in Ireland. It is no small tribute to her piety and Christian prudence, that in many instances she overcame the strong prejudice against her proceedings, which had existed in the minds of some of the leading Methodists, and, by a resolution of the Conference in 1811, was re-admitted as a member of the Society. Her greatest success was in Ulster. Towards the close of 1815, she for the first time visited this province. Vast crowds flocked to hear her preach; Methodist chapels, Presbyterian meeting-houses, and even an Episcopal church, were thrown open to her, and filled with earnest listeners; until at length she had to take her stand in the open air, no buildings being sufficient to afford accommodation for the immense numbers who collected, sometimes amounting to eight or ten thousand persons. Two years later, she again visited the north of Ireland, with the same general acceptance, and was accompanied with similar success, traces of which are to be found to the present day.

At the period before us a man named David Stanley, a chandler in Bandon, was converted, and animated by an earnest desire for the salvation of his relatives, brought some of the leaders to the house of his uncle, James Stanley, of Carhoo. This led not only to services being held here regularly by the ministers of the circuit, but also to the conversion of several members of Mr. Stanley's family, including his wife, a widowed daughter, Mrs. Connell, and her daughter, subsequently Mrs. Robert Edwards. Mrs. Stanley died suddenly in 1842, at the advanced age of eighty-six, leaving behind her the fragrance of a life of deep though unostentatious benevolence and devotion. Two years later, the services were transferred to the house of her grand-niece, a daughter of the above David Stanley, who had married Mr. John Dawson, a grandson of Richard Dawson, of Mossgrove, and have been continued there to the present day.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1816.

THE request of some of the petitioners for the ordinances having been granted, notwithstanding the resolution of the Conference, other claimants became more urgent, and thus fresh violations of the rule took place. On January 6th, 1816, Mr. Steele writes:—“Last Sunday, Mr. Cranston and I administered the Lord’s supper to about one hundred and fifty persons in Armagh chapel. The power of God was peculiarly present on the occasion. I do not believe there was one in the house that did not feel His gracious influence. The Lord is reviving His work about Keady and Killyleagh. Since we began to administer the Sacraments, some of the most hardened sinners have been constrained in the prayer-meetings to cry aloud for mercy.” In Strabane also, Messrs. Thomas Kerr and James Johnston, had similar tokens of the Lord’s goodness; and some, who had lent their names and influence to oppose the preachers, now joined heartily in supporting them, and were blessed in their deed.

On the Coleraine circuit, the ministers, Messrs. Alexander Sturgeon and Cobain, declined to comply with the request of those who desired to receive the Lord’s supper, which led to a temporary division in the Society. At length, after repeated invitations, Mr. Lanktree visited them. He was followed by Mr. William Hamilton, who continued in the neighbourhood until Conference, during which time many conversions took place, and the Societies were preserved, comforted, and increased. Some of the friends in Belfast having heard of the refreshing seasons enjoyed by their brethren, in connection with the dispensing of the ordinances, desired to enjoy a similar privilege. The trustees of Donegal square chapel, however, refused to allow the building to be used for such a purpose. This led to the erection of another

preaching-house in Cotton court, which was built in about three months, and opened on June 2nd. Such was the hallowed influence felt on the occasion that a lady present, who had been very sceptical on the subject of the Spirit's operations, was heard to say, she had now witnessed an outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and that God was with the people of a truth. Warm with the devotional spirit of the ordinance, those present drew up an address "to the preachers, leaders, and members of the Methodist Societies in Ireland," in which they referred to the spiritual benefit derived in receiving the memorials of the Saviour's dying love from the hands of the preachers, and invited others to partake of similar blessings. So far from being deprived of the Divine favour, the writers say, they had proved the reverse in every part of the circuit where they had surrounded the table of the Lord. Penitents had been pardoned, believers filled with joy and peace, and many added to the Societies.*

The public discussion of the dispensing of the ordinances was continued with unabated ardour, an able pamphlet being issued by Mr. Thomas Johnson, entitled "A Dialogue between a Preacher and Leader," in which he defended the itinerants who had administered the Lord's supper, and condemned the spirit and conduct of those who had opposed them.

Meanwhile, those who objected to the change, seeing increased evidence of the desire for the ordinances, and fearing the Conference would yield, became alarmed, and called meetings of their friends to consider "the deplorable schism which had made its appearance amongst the Methodist Societies." The most important of these gatherings was held at Strabane, on February 22nd, and consisted of trustees, stewards, and leaders from different circuits in the Londonderry district. A series of resolutions were passed, earnestly requesting the members of the Conference "to preserve the deposit of simple Methodism committed to them inviolate, and to purge from among them those disorderly men who had betrayed the confidence placed in them, if they would not desist from their ill-judged proceedings and return to order;" and also pledging those present not to receive or sustain any preacher who would not engage "to maintain and

* Lanktree's Narrative, pp. 254-57.

support original Methodism." The resolutions were signed by eighty-five office-bearers of the Societies in the district.

Services had been held for some time in a large school-house in Ballymacarret, Belfast, where were promising congregations; but through the influence of some parties who were displeased at the preachers for administering the Lord's supper, they were deprived of the further use of the building. This was the first of numerous cases of a similar description, which occurred in connection with the sacramental controversy, and those who thus acted in this instance had little reason to exult over their performance. Soon another place for preaching was rented, while the old school-house was suddenly and completely destroyed by a violent tempest.

It is pleasing to turn our attention from these scenes of strife and contention to notice tokens of the Divine presence in prospering blessing. At a service in Portaferry, the word preached was accompanied with unusual power, so that some persons present from Ballyquintin were convinced of sin, and led to become Methodists. A new and vigorous society was thus formed, which branched out to Newcastle, Kearney, and other adjoining places, and added considerably to the membership in this neighbourhood.

Mr. Bailey, the superintendent of Cookstown, considering that his circuit afforded a promising field for missionary operations, requested Mr. Addy to come to his assistance. The devoted evangelist having complied, the two commenced their mission on a fair-day in the town. Some thousands of persons attended the service, and Mr. Addy preached from Job xxi. 3: "Suffer me that I may speak, and after that I have spoken, mock on." Encouraged by his success on this occasion, he preached in the street on each succeeding market-day, and with tokens of the Divine blessing. Arrangements having been made for a large gathering of cock-fighters, at Desertmartin, Messrs. Richey and Addy went boldly to the place where "Satan's seat" was, and proclaimed to a misguided multitude the message of eternal life. There was no cock-fighting that day; and other fruit followed in some persons being convinced of the evil of their doings, and led to seek the Lord.*

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1851, p. 420.

About this time a young lady, having been led to the full consecration of her life to the service of God, entered on a course of extensive and protracted usefulness. Born in 1791, of respectable parents, and trained in the fear of the Lord, Anne Lutton of Moira, was no ordinary woman. She had a marvellous capacity for acquiring languages: that which involves much hard toil to others appears to have been a pleasing recreation to her. Cheerful, unostentatious, and saintly, with a well stored mind, great tenderness of conscience, and unflagging zeal, she was one whom to know was to esteem and love. Called of God to proclaim to her fellow countrywomen the love of Christ, had she consulted her own feelings merely, her natural diffidence, deep humility, and dislike to prominence would have presented an insurmountable barrier. But, believing that the Lord commanded, she dare not disobey, and He crowned her labours with abundant blessing. Her public ministrations were chiefly confined to the counties of Armagh, Down, and Antrim. The stately solemnity of Miss Lutton's appearance and manner, and the heartfelt earnestness of her prayerful appeals to conscience, accompanied with the Holy Spirit, produced powerful effects on the crowds of women that flocked to hear her.

The Rev. John Barber had been appointed by the British Conference to preside in Ireland, with power to nominate another minister if his own health proved unequal to the journey. Accordingly when the time for the meeting of the Irish preachers approached, he wrote to Dr. Clarke, appointing him to take his place. The doctor replied assigning various reasons for not complying; but before the letter was delivered, Mr. Barber passed to the home above, so there was no alternative but for the nomination to stand.

On June 21st, Dr. Clarke, accompanied by two friends, arrived at Donaghadee, and hastened on to Belfast, where he preached in Donegal square chapel, on the following Sabbath, to very large audiences. During this visit, he suggested the propriety and advantage of inviting the Conference to the town; the matter was taken up most heartily, and a written request prepared and forwarded, but for prudential reasons compliance had to be postponed for a few years. The learned doctor and his friends then proceeded along the coast through Carrickfergus, Le

Glenarm, Ballycastle, and Portstewart to Coleraine. Thence he went to Garvagh, Maghera, Magherafelt, Antrim, and on to Dublin; thus visiting the scenes of his childhood and youth, which were ever regarded by him with deep and loving interest.

The Conference met on July 5th, with Dr. Clarke in the chair. A letter having been read from Mr. Ferguson, proposing that the office of secretary should be retained by the same preacher from year to year, after a brief debate, it was resolved that the minister who had held the office should be eligible for re-election. Mr. Wood was chosen this year. A resolution was passed to the effect that every second vacancy in the Irish proportion of the Hundred should be filled by vote, instead of all being chosen by seniority. There had been one death in the ministerial ranks, that of Thomas Edwards, "a man of great plainness, humility, and zeal," who loved the Gospel that he preached, and died in the full assurance of faith. Although "new ground had been broken up" during the previous year, and "many sinners awakened," there was a decrease in the membership of eight hundred and fifteen, no doubt the result of the uneasy and distracted state of the Connexion.

The all-absorbing subject of consideration was the administration of the Sacraments, concerning which the results of the Conference deliberations were awaited with intense and widespread anxiety. The questions considered in connection with this business were, what should be done with respect to the preachers who had violated an express enactment by administering the Lord's supper; and, should any new or amended regulations be adopted, in regard to the dispensing of the ordinances. The ministers arraigned for violation of connexional order, were Messrs. Lanktree, George Stephenson, Steele, Cranston, Thomas Johnson, William Hamilton, Thomas Kerr, and James Johnston. After each of the brethren had been heard in his own defence, and they had severally pleaded, according to the special local circumstances in which they had been placed, it was resolved that Brothers Lanktree, Stephenson, Steele, Thomas Johnson, and Cranston be reprehended, and also judged ineligible to fill the offices of secretary of the Conference, representative to England, and chairman of their respective districts for the ensuing year; while Brothers Thomas Kerr, William Hamilton, and James

Johnston were, in addition to this censure, declared to be ineligible to fill the office of superintendent for the year; the difference in the criminality of the two classes being, that the preachers in the first case were believed to have been placed in circumstances more pressing and difficult than those of the other group, and therefore less worthy of blame.

On the question of the administration of the Sacraments, a great change had taken place in the opinion of many of the preachers. The deep and widespread feeling in favour of the ordinances, and the painful circumstances into which this had brought the Conference, made a profound impression. Mr. Tobias and other leading ministers, who had previously either opposed granting the request of the petitioners or pleaded for delay, now boldly declared their altered views, insisting that something must be done, and that at once.

So marked was this change that, even before the discussion of the subject had commenced, the final issue was apparent to every attentive observer. The Dublin leaders, seeing clearly the direction in which legislation was moving, and that no appeals, arguments, or protests of theirs, could arrest its progress, had recourse to civil law. A statement of the case, from their standpoint, was submitted to the Right Hon. William Saurin, the Attorney General for Ireland, who gave it as his opinion that if any of the members or preachers should deviate from the original plan and discipline of the Society, they would cease to be Methodists, and could not claim the houses of worship for their use; and further, that neither a majority of the trustees, nor all of them concurring, could suffer the chapels vested in them to be used for any other purposes than those of the original plan as defined in the trust deeds. Mr. Benjamin Kearney, an attorney in the city, at once sent to the Conference a copy of this opinion, which produced a great sensation. This was, however, soon allayed by the President, who insisted that if on examination of the trust deeds, it should appear that there was no condition specified, with reference to the Sacraments, the trustees could not interfere, as they could only plead a breach of trust.

At an early stage of the Conference business, a committee was appointed to consider if any new or amended regulations

should be adopted in regard to the administration of the sacred ordinances; and previous to its report being read, Mr. Tobias made a most powerful and affecting appeal to the brethren to cling to God and to each other. The preachers were electrified, and simultaneously starting to their feet, exclaimed as with one voice, "We will stand or fall together!" The results of the deliberations of the Committee were then read. They had resolved that, without further delay, something should be done to meet the spiritual wants of the people, and stated the conditions on which this should be conceded. The subject was at once discussed in a long, earnest, and able debate, during which no less than twenty-eight speeches were delivered. The chief speakers for the adoption of the report were Messrs. Tobias, Wood, Mayne, Steele, and Bailey; while amongst those in opposition were Messrs. Averell, William Stewart, and Andrew Hamilton, junr. At length, "to restore and preserve peace in the Societies," a resolution granting the prayer of the petitioners, but subject to certain guards and restrictions, was passed by a majority of thirty-six, there then being sixty-two for, and twenty-six against.

It was enacted that the Lord's supper should not be administered in any place without the consent of Conference, leave being granted to the following eight circuits, Sligo, Newry, Armagh, Tanderagee, Belfast, Carrickfergus, Strabane, and Coleraine; two-thirds of the stewards and leaders of a circuit must vote in favour of the ordinances before permission could be given to that circuit, and an equal proportion of stewards, leaders, and trustees of a chapel before it could be used for such a purpose; the preachers who had administered the Lord's supper, should not be stationed in circuits where its administration was not allowed, unless petitioned for by a majority of the quarterly meeting; there was to be no further agitation of the question, any preacher who published a pamphlet or circular letter on either side being liable to be put back on trial, or suspended for a year; and the Eucharist was not to be administered in any place on the same day as in the parish church. Such were the limitations and conditions imposed by the Conference in granting to the people a privilege claimed by them for twenty years. It has been well said, "It would be difficult to cite from the whole history of the

denomination, a more exemplary instance of moderation, or a more equitable adjustment of a controverted question."

The minority accepted this decision with Christian meekness, and resolved to stand by their brethren. Even Mr. Averell said that his opposition was now at an end; he had opposed the measure, but would do so no more, for he could not better himself if he separated from those with whom he had been so long and happily associated. In the Address to the British Conference, it is affirmed:—"We are all of one heart and of one soul, and that which threatened to divide us has, through the providence of Him who ruleth all events to His glory, contributed to cement us more closely together."

It was also resolved that an affectionate address should be prepared, announcing the decision of the Conference. This duty was discharged with great tact and tenderness by Mr. Wood, who briefly sketched the history of Wesley's deviations from the Established Church, the trying position as to the ordinances in which many members of the Society had been placed, their urgent and repeated appeals for relief, and the unwillingness of the preachers to comply, lest it should be considered a forsaking the old paths. "But," it is added, "the painful crisis has arrived, and the Conference, after having long struggled against the cries and importunities of thousands of its spiritual children, is driven to this awful alternative, to comply with their requisition or lose them entirely." "Having weighed this delicate subject with the greatest seriousness and deliberation, feeling the tenderest pity for those of the brethren who thought themselves aggrieved, and yet resolved not to deviate one hair's breadth beyond the line of necessity, the Conference has felt it imperious to make some provision for the petitioners,—nevertheless, subjecting the whole plan of this provision to the elective will and consent of a vast majority of the constitutional authorities of each circuit and chapel, and thereby throwing the responsibility of all future deviations upon the people, or their representatives."

Neither the moderation of the resolutions adopted, the prudent counsels of the Conference enforced in the Address, nor the influence of pious and judicious ministers could restrain the people from the greatest excitement and agitation. Numbers refused to receive again or sustain the preachers, many of whom,

thus deprived of almost all means of support, were compelled to suffer severe privations. The heavy debt which rested on the funds of the Society rendered any assistance from that quarter impossible; while a general scarcity of food then prevalent, greatly aggravated the distress of the servants of God. These trials were borne by them with calm and heroic Christian fortitude, but their faith was put to a still more painful test. A goodly number of the chapels were closed against them, and thus means were used to deprive them of even an opportunity of working for Christ; but nothing daunted, excluded from the houses, the brave evangelists took their stand in the open air. Thus Mr. William Keys, on arriving at Newtownbutler, and finding himself excluded from the use of the chapel, exclaimed, "Where am I to preach to-day?" Mr. Robert Morrison of Cornabragh, taking a chair in his hand, replied, "Come, brother, to the street, stand on this chair, and my shoulders will make a desk for you." A more manly pair never stood together; and as they lustily sang Jehovah's praise, many assembled to hear, and the Lord gave His effectual blessing.

But that which must have been most painful to the preachers was an immediate, widespread, and permanent division in the Society. Within three weeks of the passing of the Conference resolutions, some sixty-six stewards and leaders met at Charlemont, and resolved that the majority of the preachers were no longer worthy of support, that in future none would be provided for who had identified themselves with the destroyers of "the simple system of discipline" so long established, and that those preachers only would be received who publicly protested against the decision of the Conference. In Tanderagee also, a similar course was adopted. In order, however, to united action, meetings of representatives from circuits that opposed the action of the preachers, were held first at Aughnacloy, and then at Newtownstewart. In the circular letter containing the resolutions agreed to at the former, an overture was made to the preachers that had voted against the new measure, "to join the people who adhered to first principles," but none accepted the invitation. Arrangements were then made for holding a Conference at Clones, to which the circuits were requested to send such accredited local preachers as were considered suitable for the

itinerancy. This meeting was held on October 2nd. Mr. Samuel Moorhead, who had been in the active work, but retired on account of his health, was president, and Mr. Swanzy, secretary. Nineteen brethren having been recommended were received as preachers. These included John Mallin and William Browne of Cavan, George M. West of Londonderry, Richard and James Robinson of Kesh, William Herbert of Moybane, Edward Addy and Thomas M'Fann of Cookstown, Alexander Stewart, who had travelled one year, and George H. Irwin and Edward Whittle of Armagh. The preachers thus appointed went forth, and in numerous instances were warmly received, private houses, school-rooms, and other facilities being afforded them for preaching, as well as a large number of chapels that had been secured.

While thus some of those who opposed the dispensing of the ordinances took these decisive steps to form a separate body, and thus continue Methodism in its original form, others as much averse to the change remained in connection with the Society. These in general were guided by the advice of the Dublin leaders, who, though strenuously opposed to the new order of things, were anxious to guard against a premature division, and recommended the people "to receive those preachers universally who were content to make the houses as formerly, places only of preaching and prayer," in hope that the Conference on again meeting would retrace its steps. With this view, a form of remonstrance was sent to the different circuits, to be signed by those who objected to the new measure; and it was suggested that two persons should be deputed from each district, to assemble in Dublin at the time of Conference, and seek an amicable adjustment of the matters in dispute.

In the midst of these disturbing and distracting circumstances the preachers were cheered by the firm support and hearty sympathy of many of their people. Mr. Morrison of Cornabragh, wrote, "I have been asked to a meeting of the Aughnacloy rallyers, but am resolved to sink to the bottom with the preachers, or outride the billows." And right nobly he stood, almost alone, against the surging elements. Through the wise counsel and godly influence of Mr. Hughes at Portarlington, Mr. Richard Winter at Wexford, Mr. Kinnear at Banbridge, and Mr. Ross at Dromore, the Society in each case was preserved intact. Drogheda,

Birr, and Coleraine, as well as other places also, remained untouched by the sad and desolating struggle. A violent letter having been sent by the stewards and leaders of Belturbet, urging that the doors should be shut against the preachers, the leaders at Coleraine replied in a document remarkable for its moderation, wisdom, and piety, stating their conviction that there were those who from conscientious motives desired a change, and that the Conference acted wisely in making a provision to meet the wishes of such persons.

A special Address to the preachers and Societies in Ireland was sent by the British Conference, expressing approval of the course adopted, and adding: "So fully have the British Conference all schemes that divide the preachers in the most perfect detestation and abhorrence, that we are led to promise to support, by every means in our power, all those preachers who abide in that union which has been formed by the Great Head of the Church; and has been so signally blessed by Him in the conversion of thousands, and the building up of the Church of God; and we adjure them, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to abide in Him, and in the strictest union with each other and with the Conference, and to expect the continued blessing of God on their labours, while keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Meantime, those who had desired the administration of the Sacraments by the preachers were not idle. On August 13th, a meeting was held at Aughnacloy, "for the purpose of taking into consideration the state of the Connexion in Ireland." This was attended by two hundred and thirty-six office-bearers of the Society, with Mr. W. Glenny as chairman, and Mr. Shillington as secretary. A series of resolutions were passed, cordially receiving the decision of the Conference, approving the manner in which it had been given, and expressing a determination to stand firm in the defence of the preachers, and contribute as much as possible to their support. Even in Dublin, an association was formed to secure the ordinances for the members of Society, and an address issued replying to the various objections raised to the resolutions of the Conference, as well as expressing a determination to defend the character of the preachers so unjustly maligned. On November 13th, a meeting of the trustees, stewards,

and leaders of the Newry, Belfast, Londonderry, Enniskillen, and Clones districts was held in Dungannon, to take into consideration the state of several houses belonging to the Connexion, to inquire into the best method for recovering such as had been illegally closed against the preachers, and to adopt such measures as might appear necessary in order to vigorously support the Conference. An earnest and powerful address to the leaders and members of the Societies was unanimously adopted, and also resolutions expressing hearty approval of the action of the Conference, and a determination to support that body to the utmost, employing the most prompt and vigorous measures, where the chapels had been closed against the preachers. To carry these resolutions into effect, a committee was appointed, to the wise and decisive action of which subsequently, Wesleyan Methodism in Ireland is deeply indebted.*

During this period of agitation, when the advocates of the Sacraments were severely pressed by hostile influences, they consulted Dr. Clarke on the subject. The closing paragraph of his reply is worthy of record: "Give up the Sacrament of the Lord's supper when you go to drink the new wine in the kingdom of God. Let neither fear nor flattery induce you to do it one moment sooner. Had you had it twenty years ago, you would have been now doubly more numerous, and doubly more holy. God has broken your chain; if you mend it, or suffer others to do so, you will have His curse and not His blessing."

The ministers in Dublin, at this period, were placed in an exceedingly trying position, yet acted with great prudence and foresight. As nearly all the senior office-bearers of the Society were strongly opposed to the resolution of the Conference, and thus there was every prospect of their eventually forming a separate society, the young men who possessed suitable gifts were

* The following are the names of those who were thus appointed members of what was called the Dungannon Committee:—Messrs. T. Shillington, Portadown, chairman; A. Wilkinson, Newry, secretary; J. Johnson, Lurgan, treasurer; J. Noble, Armagh; Joseph Robinson and S. Richardson, Monaghan; A. Crookshank, Londonderry; Hans Baird, Newry; Allan Edmondston, Boyle; George Manning, Drogheda; J. M'Morran, Lurgan; J. Mains, Tanderagee; and W. Harpur, Killasandra; to whom were subsequently added, J. Archbold, Belfast; W. Lock, Cockhill; W. Martin, Dervock; S. Hill, Bushmills; W. Reed, Charlemont; G. Gamble, Enniskillen; W. Dobson, Warrenpoint; and A. Mackey, Antrim.

appointed prayer leaders, and formed into a regular organization, preparing them for usefulness in more responsible official positions. Subsequent events attested the wisdom of this course.

Passing, however, from the history of this painful controversy, to that of the evangelistic worth of Methodism, we find that John Armstrong, who had been placed on the list of reserve by the Conference, was sent to assist Mr. Ouseley on the Derry and Antrim mission. Being instructed to go straight to Kilrea, on approaching the town, he inquired of a man whom he met if there were any Methodists there, and was told there were two, one a tinker and the other a cooper; the former was probably out through the country with his kit, but the latter would likely be at home. Then proceeding to the address given, the young missionary was heartily welcomed by his host, Jack M'Dougall, who, as it was dinner-time, ordered "another herrin" to be put on the fire for the preacher. Here also Mr. Armstrong met his superintendent, and asked for his plan. "Plan, my son!" said the indefatigable missionary, "I have no plan to give you. The whole country is before you; go into every house where you will get leave to preach, exhort, or pray." This he did in the spirit of the instructions which he received; preaching not only in houses, but in fairs and markets; numerous doors were opened, and many souls saved. At one place, near Garvagh, the kind host finding his house too small for the congregation, asked a neighbour for the use of the loft of his barn, which was granted. But during the service the beam which supported this upper room suddenly broke, and down fell the floor with about three hundred persons, amid a scene of terror and confusion; many were wounded, but none killed.

Messrs. George Stephenson and Lanktree having been reappointed to Belfast, found that they were placed in such a relation to the majority of their people, that they could engage in their work with mutual advantage; the regular and authorized administration of the Lord's supper proving a means of much spiritual good, while the preaching of the word was accompanied with Divine power, although there were some who left the Society, and others prepared to secede. As there was an extraordinary dearth and scarcity of food, a meeting was called of several members and friends of the Society, in December, when

was formed the Methodist Benevolent Society, which aimed at assisting those found in delicate and trying circumstances, and extreme cases of affliction not embraced by other institutions. A depository was provided for wearing apparel; and visitors were chosen to solicit subscriptions, relieve the afflicted, and minister to their spiritual consolation. Thus a vast amount of good was accomplished. Finding it impossible to attend to the numerous and various openings presented, the Belfast preachers laid their case before the Missionary Committee, and thus succeeded in obtaining a preacher who should give himself wholly to missionary work. John Hill was appointed to labour especially in the Ards, which proved a great blessing to that country; and during the year no less than one hundred and fifty members were added to the Society.

In the parishes of Murragh and Kinneigh, to the west of Bandon, there was amongst the lower classes a considerable amount of opposition to Methodism, so that the preachers were exposed to much annoyance and even peril. The Lord, however, preserved them from personal injury, and that frequently in a most remarkable manner. Mr. Hosford, of Farranmareen, had a large and very fierce dog, that seemed to know instinctively the day of the preacher's coming, and made it a regular practice to meet him at Newcestown and accompany him home, thus protecting him from violence. The ministers were accustomed to proceed thence to Dunmanway, and, in passing a part of the road, at Belrose, about half a mile south of where the Rushfield chapel now stands, generally suffered great annoyance from a party of rowdies who were wont to assemble there. On one occasion as Gustavus Armstrong, accompanied by William, a son of Joseph Hosford, was thus treated, he stopped, and addressing the turbulent fellows, said, "Well, boys, you will have more to shout about before I come back again." On that day fortnight, one of their number killed another, and such was the profound impression made by this sad occurrence, in connection with the words of the servant of God, that the preachers were never afterward insulted in this neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XXX.

1817.

THE controversy concerning the administration of the Sacraments was now at its height, and carried on with much personal feeling and even bitterness. To abate the evil effects of this, Ouseley wrote, spoke, and, if possible, laboured more indefatigably than ever. So intensely was he engaged in pursuit of this great object that sometimes he continued in incessant labours for six months, without being more than one week at home. Thus on May 11th, 1817, he remarks:—"I had to lay by my pen, before I could close my letter, nor could I take it up again, with preaching, long journeys, etc., till I reached home, not having spent more than one week in all with my dear wife since November last, nor having seen her but twice all that time. The work of the Lord so increased on every hand, that I could not spare time for anything else but to attend to it. If I would do good to the Roman Catholics, there is no plan better for me than to travel through the kingdom, as extensively as possible, and preach all I can, without and within. Thus I come to them unexpectedly, and they hear quietly before the priests have time to warn them. This has so well succeeded this year that more Roman Catholics have been awakened and joined our Society, since last Conference, than I had seen for five years previously. Even since I last wrote you in January, about twenty have joined in my course."

It having been stated, by a high legal authority, that the preachers by their recent decision had forfeited all claim to the use of the chapels, in many instances the doors were closed against them. Amongst the rest the trustees of the house in Londonderry, acting on this opinion, excluded Mr. Dinnen, the minister appointed by the Conference, and refused to allow him to conduct religious service there, unless he would engage "to relinquish all connection with the Conference, and those who were

disposed to submit to it." On his declining to comply with these terms, they appointed Mr. George M. West to officiate in the chapel. At the instigation of the Dungannon Committee, who realized the vital importance of the questions at issue, and believed the Conference had done nothing to forfeit the property invested in its name, Mr. Dinnen and one of the congregation, on February 15th, petitioned the Lord Chancellor to be restored to the use of the chapel, and that the trustees who had so grievously violated their trust might be removed. The respondents answered on April 23rd, insisting in substance that the Conference in permitting the administration of the Sacraments by the preachers and allowing services in Methodist chapels at church hours, had introduced a radical change in Methodism and violated their duty, and that therefore their character, as the Conference of the Methodists, and their right to appoint preachers to the use of the chapels had ceased. On May 12th, an order was made referring it to Stewart King, Esq., Master in Chancery, to inquire and report whether the petitioner, Mr. Dinnen, was a preacher duly appointed under the meaning of the deeds mentioned in the pleadings, being Wesley's Deed of Declaration, and the deed under which the trustees held the chapel in question. And also to inquire and report whether Mr. West had officiated in the house, for what time, and by what authority.

On June 20th, Master King made his report, which was favourable to the petitioners; and added, that from the clearest and most satisfactory evidence he was fully persuaded that the Methodist Conference of 1816 had done nothing contrary to Mr. Wesley's writings and acts, as produced in evidence; that it appeared to him that the Conference had only done what Mr. Wesley had done before in many instances, and by the same authority, viz., wholly independent of the authority of the Established Church; and that if the acts of the Conference should be now visited on them, the same visitation should have fallen on Mr. Wesley in his lifetime, inasmuch as he had done before, what the Conference had just done. The case came up again for judgment on July 5th, when counsel for the respondents urged new objections to a decision unfavourable to their clients, but were ably answered by their opponents. The conflict was strong; the leading parties opposed to the Conference were all in court,

and much excitement prevailed in reference to the result, which came at last. It was this: Mr. Dinnen had the right of appointment; Mr. West had no such right; the respondents must go again before the Master in Chancery to prove it, if Mr. Dinnen had done anything to warrant them in refusing to admit him to the chapel; and, as they might have done this before, they should pay all the costs. This decision, however, did not finally settle the question, as it left it in the power of the respondents, if they chose, to re-open the case before the Master, which it was vainly hoped by the friends of the Conference would not be done; but of this more again.

The New Connexion now sustained a serious loss in being deprived of Mr. McClure, their first preacher in Ireland. For a couple of months he had been very delicate, and at times suffered extreme pain, until at length the end approached. He had a sore conflict with Satan, but obtained the victory. When life was nearly gone, he was requested to indicate by a motion of the hand if all was well with him. The eyes of the dying saint immediately opened, and, looking upward, he raised his arm and said, "Yes, all is well. My heart is bound by the cords of love." His eyes then closed, and, smiling placidly, he ceased to breathe on May 14th, aged thirty-eight years.

At the annual missionary meeting held in Dublin on May 15th, Mr. Francis H. Holdcroft in the chair, it was resolved, that the Society previously designated "The Methodist Missionary Society for the Dublin District," should in future be called "The Hibernian Methodist Missionary Society, Auxiliary to the General British Methodist Missionary Society," thus including the whole of Ireland as its sphere of operations, instead of a particular district. In the report read, there is a grateful recognition of the services rendered during the previous year by juvenile associations in connection with Wesley and Whitefriar street chapels, Dublin, by which £17 4s. 4d. was raised—the first fruit of many thousand pounds since collected for missions by children in Ireland.

The reports furnished by the missionaries were most encouraging. Mr. Noble writes that there had been "a most glorious work in the county of Derry." In a small tract of country between Kilrea and Garvagh, a circuit was formed that received

two missionaries every night in the month ; classes were commenced in almost every village, and the congregations were very large. The services sometimes continued for five or six hours, while the people expressed the agony of their souls by strong and bitter cries. At one of these meetings in Kilrea, during which many were converted, when the preachers and leaders were exhausted, the service was continued by some devoted sisters who were present. Scarcely a night passed that some were not made happy in God. In one little village, previously noted for its wickedness, the public house was shut up, cock-fighting abandoned, and nearly all the people converted.

From the county of Down, Mr. John Hill writes that prejudice was removed, multitudes attended the services and listened with deep attention, and the blessed effects were most apparent ; drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, and profane swearing being almost given up, while upwards of one hundred persons had been received into the Society. In the district of country between Donaghadee and Portaferry especially, there was an extensive awakening ; while on the Newry mission, Mr. Samuel Alcorn commenced seven Sunday schools, with about one thousand scholars, and was cheered by "many sound conversions," some of which gave promise of extensive usefulness.

In Cavan, Mr. John Hamilton found a large tract of country, where the people had no opportunity previously of hearing the Gospel, and they assembled in crowds at the fairs and markets. At Bellanagh, a little town that had been burned in the rebellion, the people wept and smote their breasts in such a way, during a service, that the missionary for some time could do little but weep with them, and when he endeavoured to dismiss them with the benediction, they would not go away. Not only was a small society formed in the village, but also, in the district of country, a circuit with fourteen stopping places, seven classes, and seventy-eight members.

Mr. James Horne, who had been appointed to Aughrim, says that he had opened several new places, and established regular preaching at Frankford, Ferbane, and a place near Athlone called Creggan. There was a general improvement in the congregations, as well as increased attention to the word preached, and some marked conversions. Mr. William Cornwall travelled

through the baronies of Leyny, Tirawley, and Tireragh, without place or plan, received by some parties and rejected by others, until he had ten or twelve stated appointments.

Concerning Arklow, Mr. Andrew Taylor states that his work here prospered greatly, leading to a blessed awakening, during which the old members were revived, many additions made to the Society, and the congregations such that at times the accommodation was insufficient for those who desired to attend. At Carnew, a great change for the better took place. At Rathdrum, "one of the most wicked places in Ireland, where the preachers had been labouring for years, but the inhabitants could not be brought out to hear, and where Protestants paid the Romish priest for masses," now the congregations were large and attentive. Encouraging openings were also obtained at Newtownmountkennedy, Kilcoole, and Windgate; while at Newcastle, a schoolhouse was secured for the services, and many attended them.

From Youghal, Mr. Masaroon writes, that the congregations in the town were large and increasing; there was a considerable spirit of hearing, and some additions had been made to the membership. The chapel erected twenty-five years previously at Tallow, was now filled at each service, and there was a prospect of good. At Fermoy, the missionary preached in the court-house; and the hearers, including some Roman Catholics, were numerous. A promising opening was obtained at Castletown-roche; and Kilfinnane, Kilworth, Middleton, and Castlemartyr, were regularly visited, with cheering results. At Cove, Mr. Nelson had not laboured in vain. Amongst others led to the chapel was a drummer, who passing by, as the congregation engaged in singing, said to himself: "Well it would vex the devil if I would go in there, and to vex him I will do so;" and God was pleased to convince him deeply of sin during the service. On the following night, he brought one of his companions with him, and he also was awakened to a sense of his guilt and danger.* Such were some of the numerous tokens of the Lord's prospering blessing.

Conference met on July 4th; the president being the Rev. R. Reece, who was accompanied by the Rev. Henry Moore, the

* *Report of the Hibernian Methodist Missionary Society, 1817.*

influence of whom it was thought, would tend to pacify the dissentients, while his personal knowledge of Mr. Wesley, and intimate acquaintance with his views might aid the deliberations of the brethren at this critical juncture. Notwithstanding the hostile spirit that had arisen in the Societies, and the uncertainty that existed with regard to the Chancery suit, the preachers on assembling, at once proceeded with their ordinary business, as though there were no causes of uneasiness. The following ten ministers were declared to be the Irish proportion of the Hundred :—Messrs. Gustavus Armstrong, John Kerr, John Dinnen, Francis Armstrong, William M'Cornock, Thomas Kerr, Adam Averell, Samuel Wood, William Hamilton, and Michael Murphy. Two preachers had died during the year,—John M'Adam, whose last days were so marked with gracious manifestations of Divine love, that he continued rejoicing and praising God with little intermission for nearly forty-eight hours ; and Daniel M'Collom, a young man who after long and severe sufferings, induced by privations and labours, died rejoicing in the Lord.

The decrease in the membership amounted to seven thousand five hundred and eleven. In the Address to the British Conference, after referring to the manner in which the Connexion had been rent, the pecuniary embarrassment resulting from this as well as the extraordinary pressure of the times, and gratefully acknowledging the practical sympathy received from England, it is said : “ We rejoice that in the midst of our sufferings, our gracious Lord has not left us without manifest tokens of His favour. The labours of our missionaries have been much owned of God in the conversion of sinners. On the Derry and Antrim mission, especially, the Lord has truly made bare His arm ; several hundreds have been brought to the knowledge of the truth ; and a general reformation has been effected in that part of the country. We consider it also a matter of unfeigned gratitude to God, that there never did exist amongst us greater unity of affection, a more lively sense of the Divine presence, a more cheerful readiness of mind to make every necessary sacrifice, or a more fixed determination to stand or fall together in our Master's work, than have been manifested at the present Conference. Circumstanced as we now are, these things appear to us additional evidence of the good providence of God in our behalf.”

In order no doubt to enlist increased sympathy from the laity with the missions in this country, it was resolved that when the accounts of the missionaries should be examined by a committee appointed by the Conference, a deputation from the Hibernian Missionary Society, should be invited to assist at such investigations. Donations "from friends in the United Kingdom, who felt for the extreme distress of the preachers," are acknowledged to the amount of £1,177, while the subscriptions of the preachers themselves were no less than £1,230. A unanimous and very cordial vote of thanks was passed to the Dungannon Committee, and to those who had united with them, for their kind and disinterested exertions on behalf of the Connexion in times of unprecedented difficulty and distress.

Meanwhile the leaders in Dublin, who were opposed to the administration of the Sacraments, had prepared for a most determined effort to abrogate the decision of the preceding year. Although the general remonstrance they had got ready for signature was but partially adopted, the proposal to hold a meeting of representatives, during the sittings of the Conference, met with approval and a prompt response. Accordingly a number of persons assembled in Dublin, and formed themselves into a committee, for the purpose of opening negotiations with the Conference. After some correspondence, a deputation was appointed by the preachers to meet representatives of the Committee; and long and frequent interviews took place, but without satisfactory result. The delegates insisted upon the absolute and unqualified repeal of the vote of the previous year; and, while offering to consent to two or three preachers receiving Episcopal or Presbyterian ordination, so that they might dispense the ordinances to the Societies, where it should be found necessary, "positively refused to admit of Methodist preachers, as such, administering the Sacraments in any case or circumstance whatsoever." The Conference obviously could not treat on this basis, and therefore maintained its stand. Thus the negotiations were broken off, and an affectionate Address sent to the leaders and members of the Societies, explaining the position of the preachers and asserting their singleness of purpose and godly sincerity in the course adopted.

The action of the Conference, in adhering to the resolutions of the previous year, led to further secessions, especially in the

southern and midland counties. In Roscrea, for instance, where there had been a large and influential society, Messrs. Steele and Crook found themselves with a membership of one man and about a dozen women. The solitary male adherent, Mr. Leech, however, was one in a thousand, and right manfully he stood by the preachers, opening his house when every other door was closed against them, and throwing the entire weight of his influence and talents into what he believed to be the cause of truth and righteousness. Ere long Mr. Studdert and others, having been led to see matters in a different light, returned to the Society, and thus the cause in the town was preserved.

The second Clones Conference commenced its sittings on August 8th, when six thousand one hundred and thirty-six members were returned. There were received on trial five additional itinerants, including William Pattyson of Drumheriff, and James G. Brown of Downpatrick. Applications for preachers were made by eight circuits, one of which was Dublin, where, although the great body of the leaders still continued in connection with the Conference, a few zealous members resolved to separate, that they might have for themselves, what they considered, original Methodism. Having obtained the use of a large school-room on the Coombe, numerous congregations attended the ministry of the word, several classes were formed, and in a short time some hundreds were enrolled in Society.

In Limerick, a number of persons, including three leaders and about one hundred members, having seceded from the Society, and applied to the Clones Conference for a preacher, Mr. Mallin was sent. The seceders then requested to have the use of the old chapel in Quay lane, or the new one in George's street, but the leaders refused to grant either. So one of the lessees or their representatives, at once took possession of the older premises on behalf of the seceders, who were thus provided with suitable accommodation free of all cost.

But to return to Dublin; the attempt of the Committee to move the Conference having failed, the members in general gave up all hope of obtaining a repeal of the obnoxious measure, and several remained in the metropolis to consult as to what was most advisable under existing circumstances. They did not wish to identify themselves with the Society formed at Clones, and at the

same time felt so strongly, with regard to the action of the Conference, that they could not continue in connection with it. Some were so sanguine as to hope that as the preachers had not been unanimous in passing the vote, the minority might be induced to join with them in forming a new, and distinct Connexion. Accordingly a correspondence was at once opened with Mr. Averell, as the person most likely to effect an object to them so desirable. He expressed his approval of the proposed scheme, announced on September 29th his renunciation of all connection with the Conference, and placed himself at the head of the projected Association. Mr. Arthur Keene, who for thirty-four years had been steward of the Dublin Society, now with his son Martin, resigned office, and threw himself heartily into the new movement. On November 25th, Mr. Averell, to accomplish the purpose aimed at, addressed a circular letter to the preachers, calling on them to unite with him in "placing Methodism on its original basis in Ireland," and promising that no name of a preacher, who responded to the appeal, should be made public until the whole arrangements were matured. Not one minister offered his services, while a perfect storm of indignation was raised by this epistle. Mr. Steele answered in a scathing pamphlet entitled, "A few plain Facts with Observations drawn from them;" and a circular reply was issued by the Dublin preachers, in which they condemned Mr. Averell in the strongest language, for thus endeavouring to "divide and destroy" the Connexion; and warmly urged their brethren "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Meanwhile Mr. Averell removed to Dublin, where an eligible concern in South Great George's street was taken, and having been fitted up as a temporary place of worship, was opened by him in the latter end of December.

In these trying and painful circumstances, it was cheering to the Irish preachers to feel that they had the hearty sympathy of their English brethren. When the state of affairs in Ireland was the subject of discussion in the British Conference, there was but one feeling which was expressed by the President, when he said, "The Irish Methodists are our children; this is the hour of distress; and we cannot, we will not, forsake them." In the reply to the Irish Address, it is said:—"But if our hearts are touched with sorrow for those calamities which you have suffered in

common with us, how much more are we distressed by that great 'fight of affliction,' that 'fiery trial,' which has been peculiar to yourselves? The union, the firmness, and the spirit of sacrifice, manifested by you on this occasion, have filled us with admiration of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which is in you. In addition to the pecuniary relief which some of our people afforded you, we have directed our book steward to make certain arrangements which will further contribute to that object; and it would have afforded us unfeigned pleasure, had the circumstances of the times permitted, to have rendered still more effectual, assistance."

But what was most cheering of all was the manifest evidence of the Divine presence and blessing in awakening and converting power. From all parts of the country there were reports of glorious success. A leader writes from Dublin, "The congregations in Whitefriar street chapel never were larger." Nor were conversions lacking. One of the brightest trophies won for Christ at this period was John Summerfield, whose name and memory are as fragrant to-day, as sixty years ago when his remains were laid in the silent sepulchre. Born at Preston, on January 31st, 1798, from childhood he evinced a mind of no ordinary strength and fertility. Notwithstanding the watchful care and prayerful solicitude of his devoted father, John, prompted by an intense love for oratory, acquired a taste for theatricals, which led him into association with the gay and foolish, amongst whom sinful pursuits were familiar. In these youthful follies he was not left to himself; the Spirit of God strove powerfully with him, and frequently brought him in contrition of soul to the throne of grace. One day in Dublin, while thus humbled under a sense of his sinfulness, his appearance attracted the attention of William Haughton, who at once entered into conversation with the penitent, ascertained his spiritual state, and invited him to his house in Charles street, where a meeting for prayer was about to be held. Here on that evening, in a little room, where Wesley had often pleaded for the Divine blessing, John Summerfield, surrounded by a number of wrestling Jacobs, sought and found mercy, and thus entered on that brilliant though brief career, which was so wonderfully owned of God. On September 28th, he joined the Society, being received into the class of Mr.

Patrick Ffrench, and was thus brought under the notice of the preachers, who regarded the young convert with deep and loving interest.

Another triumph of Divine grace was a young tutor, named John Feely, an excellent Irish scholar. He was a zealous Romanist, much given to controversy, having studied carefully the standard works of his Church, and succeeded in prevailing on some weak-minded Protestants to abandon the faith of their fathers. When in search of a situation, he was directed to apply to a Mr. Large, a Methodist who resided at Ballintubbert, near Athy, by whom he was engaged. Mrs. Large had several religious discussions with the tutor, during one of which she expressed a desire that he would meet the preacher of the circuit, Mr. Graham, as he was so well fitted to speak on such subjects. Feely, satisfied in himself that he would have no difficulty in silencing the itinerant, said he would like very much to have an opportunity of conversing with him, and in his heart longed for the fray. At length Mr. Graham arrived, and as the time of service approached, without a discussion having taken place, the tutor thought the other was afraid, and therefore determined to force himself on his attention. The preacher having gone out for a quiet stroll, Feely followed, and introduced himself, saying he desired to have some conversation with him on religious questions. Mr. Graham grasped his hand, and, looking steadily into his face as if he read his heart, said in Irish, "Do you really know what religion is; that it belongs more to the heart than to the head? If you read carefully the Bible you will not fail to see that it is so. Have you read the Word of God to learn the way of salvation, or to obtain weapons for your warfare against the truth? Be persuaded to apply yourself prayerfully to the study of its sacred pages to ascertain what holiness is, for that and nought else is religion, and Rome and yourself will ere long part." Then the preacher prayed with all the fervour of his soul, "May God be your light and salvation." Feely was confounded, he felt himself fairly beaten, without having even drawn his sword; but a truth had entered his mind of which he previously had no conception. As soon as possible he procured a Bible, which he searched with the earnest but vain hope of finding his religion there; and as he continued to study its sacred pages the

darkness in which he had been enveloped gradually disappeared. He began to attend the Methodist services, and after a painful and protracted struggle, cast his weary sin-burdened spirit on the merits of Christ alone, and thus obtained the rest and satisfaction he had so earnestly desired. He was not, however, permitted to follow the dictates of his conscience without molestation. One day, returning from Athy, he was assaulted by a Popish mob in a most savage manner, and although he escaped with life, the beating received so affected his head as to lay the foundation of a complaint which eventually terminated his useful labours. The rejoicing convert soon began to employ his talents in Christian work, more especially as a local preacher, labouring throughout the counties of Carlow and Wexford, where his ministrations were owned of the Lord and gratefully appreciated by the people.

Fossey Tackaberry, in a letter dated Tomagaddy, December 15th, says, "Our people here are doing well. Many in our class are increasing in holiness, especially the young men. They are also increasing in zeal, activity, and usefulness. Ten of us meet once a week in band, to watch over each other in the Lord, our souls have been wonderfully strengthened, comforted, and knit together; and, thanks to the Most High, while Zion is torn in other places we are determined to follow after holiness."

Mr. James Rutledge writes from Sligo: "Thank God, we have a good work in this circuit. We have very large congregations. Sinners are being converted and our Societies increasing." Amongst others, an opening for preaching the Gospel was obtained at Collooney. One of the members in Sligo, Joshua Woodland, having removed to that town, at once invited the servants of God to his house, and his neighbours to come and hear them. From that period, the preachers were always welcomed by him and his family, and much good was done.

At this time, Mr. Feckman renounced all secular employments, and, trusting in the Lord for support, gave himself up wholly to Christian work. Having removed to the county of Cork, Ballyneen was mentioned to him as a place noted for wickedness, which had resisted successfully all previous evangelistic efforts. Thither, therefore, he hastened, and soon attracted a congregation; the Lord owning his labours in the conversion of many sinners, amongst whom were George Damery, a drunken pensioner, the

terror of the village, Francis Daunt, and William Gibson, each of whom subsequently became remarkable for devoted piety, and important service rendered to Methodism. Damery said with reference to his feelings on the memorable night of his religious awakening:—"It was not the terrors of damnation which the vivid imagination of the exhorter pictured, the wailing of the lost soul, or the spirit drinking liquid fire, that affected me. No! I had stood the blaze of battle with unconcern. But oh, to be told of the Saviour's dying love, and of my black, dark ingratitude! This filled my mind with an agony words cannot express. I never in my life suffered more than I did that night." It is not surprising that a man of such a bold spirit as these words evince, proved a most courageous soldier of the Cross. Several new classes were formed as the result of Feckman's indefatigable and earnest labours.

In Limerick, there was a blessed revival, during which souls were converted almost every night, and no less than two hundred were added to the Society. Messrs. Kidd and Noble, having gone to the assistance of the circuit preachers, Messrs. Mayne and Kidd remained in the city, and Messrs. Harpur and Noble went to the country. At a prolonged meeting in Adare, twenty persons testified to having obtained a sense of sins forgiven; and on the following Sabbath seventy additional names were entered in the class books. At Ballingrane, the house was crowded, many being unable to obtain admission, while parents and children, brothers and sisters, rejoiced together with great joy. At Courtmatrix, about two hundred found themselves outside the chapel, and, although some had come ten miles, remained standing there from five in the afternoon until midnight. Shortly after the service began, cries for mercy were heard from all sides, and so earnest were the anxious inquirers that they would not leave, although the meeting was formally closed about ten times, while some remained all night wrestling in prayer. Next morning the service was resumed at sunrise, and continued until noon, the house being crowded all the time. The whole country seemed roused, numbers came to see what was the matter, and not a few of them were smitten to the earth in deep contrition of spirit. The love-feast in Limerick proved a time of such great power and blessing as those present said they had never witnessed before.*

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1818, pp. 47-8.

While thus the Lord gave His blessing in the south, He did not withhold it in the north. New fields of usefulness were entered, and in many of those long occupied large harvests were reaped. Although of seven classes in the neighbourhood of Ballinamallard, only three—those at Tullyrain, Drumbulcan, and Sidaire—remained in connection with the Conference, a new opening was obtained at Drummurry, in the house of Mr. Anderson, where a class was soon formed, and the leaders engaged in work for Christ more earnestly than ever. A Sunday-school was commenced in a corn-mill at Ballycassidy, attended by about fifty scholars; next a prayer-meeting was begun, then it was regularly visited by the preachers from the Enniskillen circuit, and at length a society was formed, which was placed under the care of John Armstrong of Sidaire. At Lettermoney, the Messrs. Black, with other young men, laboured faithfully, and were much blessed in winning souls for Christ. While at Tullyrain, Messrs. George and Robert Somerville exercised a powerful influence for good.

Messrs. William Smith and Thomas Johnson were appointed to Belfast. The former had been an opponent to the dispensing of the ordinances, and the latter a zealous supporter; but they were both pious and judicious, so that while differing in judgment they were one in heart, and entered on their work with cheering tokens of success. In a few weeks, however, Mr. Johnson, who was remarkable for his ardent devotion, fidelity, and benevolence, having been smitten with a fever, died in the full assurance of faith. His place was at once supplied by Mr. Lanktree, who had become a supernumerary for the year.

Mr. Hill was sent as a missionary to Belfast, with special reference to the county of Down, where his labours were greatly owned of the Lord. The whole district of the Ards was opened up to him, there being such a spirit of hearing in the people that accommodation for the congregations could not be obtained within doors. Frequently after the missionary had preached in the open air, the people in large numbers would follow him to the houses where he stopped; and thus again and again he ministered to their spiritual wants. There was also a deep and general awakening, and many obtained redemption through the blood of Christ. Amongst those converted we find at least one Romanist, who

became an efficient leader, and a young man, named James Patterson, who subsequently entered the itinerancy.

The missionary also seized an opportunity of visiting Copeland island, of which the inhabitants were a generation that "knew not the God of their fathers." There was, however, one exception to the general wickedness in Robert Emberson, who mourned over the state of his friends and neighbours, and often retired among the rocks to implore the Lord to have mercy upon them. When Mr. Hill came, Robert received him gladly, became a partaker of converting grace, and, when a society was formed, was appointed the leader. He was greatly beloved, the cause prospered, and a marked moral and religious improvement took place through the island. Such was the extensive and gracious work in all this district of country that the name of John Hill is fragrant among the people until this day.

Within two months, on the Portadown circuit, sixty were added to the Society, and about the same number obtained the pardoning mercy of God, while the congregations in general were more than doubled. At the Lurgan quarterly love-feast, fifty professed to having received a sense of sins forgiven. A leader in Cookstown states that he had never seen such quarterly meetings on his circuit before, the Lord was so wonderfully and powerfully present. Mr. Thomas Kerr of the Charlemont and Dungannon circuit, says that daily the Lord added to the number of His people there. Messrs. Kidd and Noble give a wonderful account of the work of God on the Ballymena Mission. Lisburn and Coleraine also were doing well, so that upon the whole the north was in a most prosperous state.*

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1818, p. 47.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1818.

ON January 1st, 1818, John Summerfield writes:—"I began this year on my knees, in Whitefriar street chapel, at the watch-night service; and soon afterward, attending a meeting in the same place, a hand touched me on the shoulder to pray. It was the first time I ever prayed in public." On the morning of the following Sabbath, he heard Mr. Wood preach, and remained for the covenant service. Next evening at class, he was called on again to pray, and on that occasion three persons professed to have found peace in believing. He was then appointed a prayer leader, his first appointment being in Cork street chapel. On January 18th, he gave his first exhortation, at a prayer-meeting in Sweeny's lane; and on April 23rd, at the morning service in Gravel walk chapel, he was requested by Mr. Cobain to preach. Having a Divine call to the ministry, Summerfield said, "I would wish to begin my race early, run it with joy, and end it with glory." He was small of stature, of feeble constitution, a young man of very delicate texture, Nature having formed him in one of her finest moulds. Though a diligent student, time did not permit him to attain full maturity of scholarship; but he possessed in a high degree all the attributes of a mind of the first order; his understanding was clear, his judgment discriminating, and his imagination so vigorous and susceptible that it cost him no effort to give vitality to familiar truths, and thus impart to the most common-place topics the freshness and interest of originality. As a pulpit orator he soon became unrivalled. Endowed with a voice of peculiar softness and sweetness, he read and spoke with such refined taste and pathos that whole audiences were melted into tears. His appearance also was peculiarly attractive, youth and beauty being combined in a frail

body—the incarnation of meekness, purity, and sweetness—while his lips seldom spake but in tones of benediction and love. The great source, however, of his influence was Divine unction. He felt the holy anointing resting on his soul, and others realized it too. Like Jacob, he wrestled with the Angel of the Covenant, had power with God, and that gave him power with men. Can we wonder that multitudes thronged to hear him preach, and hung on his words with deep and thrilling interest?

While thus the Lord called forth a young and devoted labourer into His vineyard, another, who had long toiled there, entered upon a different course of service. Mr. Averell, having failed in his attempt to secure the co-operation of any of the preachers in forming a new Society, began a correspondence with members of the Clones Conference, which resulted in arrangements for a convention in Dublin, on January 5th, to settle the rules which should govern their subsequent proceedings. A number of persons met accordingly, and agreed upon certain regulations as to the design, doctrines, and discipline of the Society, which were afterward published under the title of "The General Principles of the Methodist Constitution." As, however, the notice of the meeting had been short, and in consequence several circuits were not represented, it was resolved that an adjourned meeting should be held at Clones a few weeks later; and at it the "General Principles" underwent a second discussion, and were unanimously adopted. One of the conclusions arrived at was that the Conference should consist of all the travelling preachers in the Connexion, and one steward or leader annually elected at the quarterly meeting of each circuit. And as the object of the leaders of this movement was to constitute a religious society, and not to form themselves into a Church, another rule laid down was that if any member of the Conference should propose a resolution subversive of this principle, he by that act excluded himself from the body.

Immediately after the meeting at Clones, Mr. Averell proceeded on a tour through the country, to defend his own conduct, to further agitate the Connexion, by denouncing the preachers and their Conference, and thus to establish and extend the new Society. Of two only of his meetings we have been able to find any account. One was held at Limerick on March 13th, and the

other at Roscrea, on the 17th. At the former, Mr. Samuel Harpur was present, and replied to the address delivered, in a calm and judicious pamphlet, entitled, "A Letter to the Rev. A. Averell;" and at the latter meeting, Messrs. Steele, Crook, and Leech attended, and attempted to speak, but could not obtain a hearing. Mr. Steele, however, did not allow the statements made on this occasion to pass unchallenged; for he also published a vigorous reply, in a series of five letters addressed to the reverend speaker.

Notwithstanding the contention that thus continued, each party maintaining it was right, and endeavouring as far as possible to discredit the authority of its opponent, the Lord did not withhold His blessing. By the death of a lady in Dublin, Miss Houston, a legacy of £2,000 was left to the Hibernian Missionary Society, and £1,000 to be invested for the benefit of preachers' daughters, as well as £2,000 to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Cheering reports of spiritual success continued to be made from all parts of the kingdom. On January 25th, the Dublin preachers write: "In our several chapels (one small one in the Liberty excepted), the congregations are large and deeply serious. There are at present above twelve hundred in the Society, and a greater disposition has been evinced of late among strangers to join us, than for a considerable time previously. Several new leaders have been appointed, whose labours have been acknowledged in a more than usual way; and as to financial concerns, they have not been more favourable for many years. Peace and harmony reign through the whole Society. Preachers, leaders, and members are united in serving the Lord with gladness and singleness of heart, and the Great Head of the Church has been pleased to give His blessing in converting power."

Mr. Robert Wilson, on January 13th, writes from the Letterkenny mission, that the Lord had been graciously reviving His work there, so that almost every week souls were convinced or converted, and backsliders restored. The quarterly meeting at Rathmullan, had proved a time of Divine power, the cloud of mercy having poured down blessings on every soul present. The cries for mercy were so loud as to alarm the inhabitants of the town, who crowded in to witness and wonder at the glorious

disorder. At Rathmelton also, there was a good work, the chapel being nearly filled each Sunday. The young men especially, in Letterkenny, were doing well; and several new classes were formed on the mission.*

From the Belfast circuit and mission, the accounts were not less favourable. To such an extent did the good work prosper, that it was considered necessary to secure the assistance of Alexander Mackey, of Antrim, then on the list of reserve. When the accounts for the year came to be made up, it appeared that notwithstanding the loss of some persons in Belfast, small societies at Newtownbreda and Holywood, and a few individuals in Ballymacarret, the decrease in Belfast was only fifteen members, while in the Ards district there was an increase of nearly two hundred.

Mr. Richey, on March 10th, writes from Ballymena that the congregations in the town were more than double what they had been eight months previously, in many of the country meetings the houses were quite too small for the audiences, in the markets crowds of Romanists and others seemed eager for the bread of life; and at Kilrea, the work prospered gloriously, while several hundreds had been converted to God, and it appeared as if the blessed work was only beginning.† A few months later, Mr. Richey writes, "Our prospects are of the most encouraging kind;" and refers to the conversion of a young man, and also a young woman who had been Roman Catholics. The latter was exposed to such violent persecution that she had to leave her father's house, and, in order to obtain a livelihood, enter service. Mr. Noble mentions a family named Crilley, that had renounced Popery, joined the Society, and received the missionaries into their house.‡

Nor was the influence for good confined to this country. Ouseley visited several parts of England, preaching and collecting money, or as he puts it, offering people what they did not like to receive, and asking them for what they did not like to part with. Extensive and permanent revivals resulted almost wherever he

* *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1818, p. 190; and *Hibernian Missionary Report*, p. 22.

† *Methodist Magazine*, Dublin, 1818, p. 238.

‡ *Hibernian Missionary Report*, p. 23.

went, especially at Leeds and Hull. Perhaps the most precious fruit of these earnest labours was the conversion of the youthful Thomas Collins. Under the powerful ministry of the missionary, the heart of the lad broke utterly. The public service closed, but he would not leave. Touched by such inconsolable sorrow, Ouseley himself led him into the house of the resident minister, with whom, and with the father, the holy man continued in prayer until the tears of the weeping boy were wiped away, and he indubitably received the Spirit of adoption. The glad memory of that hour never failed, and no doubt did much to mould the character and stimulate the zeal of one of England's most devoted and successful evangelists.

Turning our attention to the legal proceedings which took place with regard to the chapel in Londonderry, we find that the trustees, or rather those who acted in their name, resolved to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded of re-opening the case. Accordingly the matters in dispute were re-investigated for twenty-five days before Master King, who after the fullest examination of the evidence offered on each side, reported again on May 18th, in favour of the rights of the Conference. The trustees then appealed to the Court of Rolls, to set aside the Master's report; and thus the case came on for hearing on June 1st, before the Right Hon. Sir William M'Mahon, Master of the Rolls. Each side was represented by some of the most eminent men at the bar, the counsel for the petitioners being Charles Kendal Bushe, Solicitor General, J. Smyly, K.C., J. Schoales, and W. P. Cruise; and for the respondents the Right Hon. William Saurin, Attorney General, Edward Penniefather, K.C., J. W. Stokes and J. Deering. When every reference to Wesley's acts and writings had failed to sustain the allegation of the respondents, appeal was made to the Act of Uniformity, to prove that inasmuch as the Conference had declared itself not a dissenting body, but still united to the Established Church, such a declaration was in direct opposition to the Act, and that as members of the Church, the preachers were liable to fines and imprisonment for administering the Sacraments.

Having heard evidence and counsel for five days, on June 19th, judgment was pronounced. "By the Conference of 1816 and 1817," said his Honour, "a power is claimed of administering

the Sacraments, and of having Divine service in church hours. Whether these are inconsistent with the opinions of Mr. Wesley, as found in his standard writings, is the question. And in this view, if we can find in these writings satisfactory, decisive, and unequivocal opinions on any of these points, we should not be at liberty to go further. Each party has quoted many passages from those writings in support of each side of these questions; and they have also resorted to the other writings of Mr. Wesley, and to the still more persuasive evidence of his acts. As to his having exercised the power of holding Divine service in church hours, I think what has been read from the fifteenth volume of his works is quite decisive. This reduces the matter to the two remaining questions; and as to them, it has been proved that in several instances Mr. Wesley authorized laymen (not episcopally ordained) to administer the Sacraments, nine for America, three for Scotland, and three for England generally. The exercise of this power by Mr. Wesley, therefore, seems to me to be clear, and the same power, though perhaps modified in some respects, is now assumed by the Conference. I cannot therefore draw an inference from these facts different from the Master's. The next question is, whether this must be in itself an illegal trust; and certainly, if it were against the provisions of any statute, the persons claiming under it could have no redress here. Looking into the Act of Uniformity, preaching is as illegal as administering the Sacraments; it is liable to be followed by an imprisonment for three months, and the other is prohibited under the penalty of £100. That Methodists have been considered as coming within the Act of Toleration, I think is plain, no case has been found to the contrary, and the case that was referred to is strong to the point; but the statute is quite express, and leaves no doubt on the subject. The parties have always acted accordingly, they have registered at the sessions, and taken out licences as these laws require, therefore there is nothing illegal in this trust. The remaining consideration is with respect to the costs. I think the application to set aside the report must be refused with costs; for when a party appeals from the decision of the Master on a matter of fact submitted to him, and the Court think the appeal unfounded, that party must pay the costs. But upon the rest of the case, I conceive these trustees

cannot be deemed to have committed a breach of trust in putting the question into a course of inquiry, and therefore each party ought to pay his own costs of that part of the proceeding. It remains only to consider whether the trustees ought to be removed. Technically speaking, they have been guilty of a breach of trust; for the Master finds that a gentleman, Mr. West, was appointed by the trustees, and still continues to keep possession of the chapel; and though it was reasonable that the chapel should be kept open, and the motive of the trustees was fair and honest, yet they exercised a power which they had no right to exercise, which amounted to a breach of trust." His Honour accordingly made an order for the removal of the trustees.

We cannot pass from the consideration of these legal proceedings, without noticing at least one cheering circumstance in connection with so much that was painful and trying. The junior counsel for the petitioners, a Roman Catholic, entered into the case with great fervour, and in order to be thoroughly made up on the whole question, carefully read Wesley's Journals, Sermons, and Notes on the New Testament, which proved the means of leading him to renounce Popery, and become a true Christian. It is due to the memory of Mr. Crookshank, who acted as solicitor for the Conference, to add that his services were entirely gratuitous, as he made no charge except what he himself had to pay in fees. On Monday, July 13th, the key of the chapel in dispute was given up, and Mr. Crookshank, his two sons, and Mr. George Burrows entered, took possession, and having knelt down, devoutly thanked God for His great goodness in thus bringing about such a long desired consummation.

Meanwhile on June 18th, the Rev. Joseph Benson made an earnest effort, in a long letter to Mr. Keene, to reunite the divided Connexion. He strongly urged that a compromise of some sort should be made, and thus have harmony and love restored. But if this could not be, "Then," said he, "in the name of the God of Peace, of the Prince of Peace, and of that Holy Spirit, the grand fruits of whose blessed influences are love and peace, let not the sword devour for ever, which would certainly be bitterness in the end; but let the trumpet sound a recall, let the people on both sides return from pursuing their brethren, and let all henceforward follow after the things which

make for peace, and the things whereby each may edify another." The answer to this fervent appeal is not recorded; but certain it is the strife still continued.

Messrs. Riddle, Whittle, and Pattyson, had been appointed by the Clones Conference to the Charlemont circuit, but within six months Mr. Riddle was laid down with fever, and passed hence in holy triumph to be "for ever with the Lord." As the year's labours of the two other brethren drew to a close, they were greatly owned of God, the June quarterly meeting and an open-air service at Tullyroan, especially proving seasons of abundant spiritual blessing. On the latter occasion, a vast crowd assembled, Mr. Pattyson preached, and the whole congregation appeared greatly moved. Among the rest, a lad of fifteen, named Robert Wilson, was deeply convinced of sin. The preacher soon found him out, said to him, "Robert, your father's prayers are answered at last;" and called on Mr. Wilson and three other parents to come forward and pray for their sons. They did not pray in vain; for the Lord revealed to the penitents His pardoning mercy. The extensive and blessed results of this meeting, eternity alone will reveal.*

The reports from the missionaries were of a very cheering kind. Mr. Nelson writes that he had formed a new class at Rathcormack, and preached to a large congregation at Cappoquin, while the number who attended the services at Cove was greater than he had seen before, and a few had been converted to God. At Killaloe, Mr. Cornwall states, some of the poor Roman Catholics had been enlightened, while at least three, including a school-master, notwithstanding the threats and persecutions of the priest and their relatives, had publicly renounced the errors of Popery. On the Galway mission, Mr. Stephens tells of a few, including one Romanist, brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, and also of the formation of a society of twenty members at Ballyboy. On the Cookstown mission, Mr. Egerton says the work of conviction and conversion was general, and at the March quarterly meeting, which continued for five hours, many testified to having been recently brought to the knowledge of the truth. Mr. John Hamilton mentions that on the Killashandra mission, "great

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1876, p. 18, and 1878, p. 316.

numbers of all denominations attended the services in the fairs and markets, and appeared to be much affected; the field-meetings were greatly owned of God, and ten new classes had been formed.”*

The Wesleyan Conference met on July 3rd. The Rev. John Gaulter presided, and was accompanied by the Rev. Jabez Bunting. Messrs. Tobias and Andrew Hamilton, sen., were elected members of the Hundred, in place of Messrs. Averell, resigned, and John Kerr, superannuated. Richard T. Tracy of Limerick, John F. Mathews of Dublin, and Alexander Mackey were received on trial. Two deaths had occurred in the ranks of the itinerancy, in addition to that of Mr. Johnson; William M’Kee, who had been seized with fever, and, after a brief illness, on July 30th, 1817, was called into the eternal world; and James Rennick, who, after a protracted and useful career, on May 27th, at Birr, finished his course with joy. Joseph Armstrong, who had been a supernumerary for eleven years, withdrew from the Connexion, and subsequently joined the Primitive Wesleyan Conference, but did not accept an appointment in the active work. A decrease in the membership of nineteen hundred and eighty-one was reported. This was accounted for partly through the rending of some circuits during the year, partly by emigration, and partly by the ravages of typhus fever. In one circuit alone, there had been one hundred and twenty emigrants, and about one hundred deaths. £762 was acknowledged as collected in England by Mr. Ouseley, while £1,232 was contributed in Ireland by the preachers towards the Connexional debt. Mr. Steele was elected representative to the British Conference, and Mr. Tobias requested to accompany him. An Address was received from the Dungannon Committee, expressing profound admiration “for the patient suffering and apostolic firmness” of the preachers, “in the hour of darkness and trial,” and grateful appreciation of their approval; and desiring the appointment of a deputation to confer with them on matters of great importance. The request was immediately complied with, and a reply sent, thanking the Committee for their expressions of cordial regard and practical sympathy, and congratulating them on the success with which, through the Divine blessing, their

* *Hibernian Missionary Report*, pp. 21-24.

persevering efforts had been crowned. The Conference also expressed their affectionate acknowledgements to Committees formed in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and other places, for their cordial co-operation with the Dungannon Committee. The British Conference was requested to appoint two of its members to visit this country previous to the Conference of 1819, and make a tour through the principal circuits, from which it was anticipated much advantage would result.

This year, the annual public meeting of the Hibernian Missionary Society was for the first time held in connection with the sittings of the Conference, and the President occupied the chair. Such was the impression made by Mr. Bunting, in seconding the first resolution, that, although it was not customary to make any financial appeal at this service, a collection was generally called for, and promptly responded to, by contributions amounting to nearly fifteen pounds.

On July 10th, a meeting was held in Dublin of the Conference of the new organization, to which was given the title of Primitive Wesleyan Methodism. Mr. Averell was unanimously chosen president—an office which he continued to hold, by annual election, as long as he was capable of discharging its duties. Alexander Anderson, David Faloon, Edward Bowes of Clones, and Adam Ford of Lisbellaw, who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months; and there were admitted on trial seven additional preachers, including William Irons of Randalstown, John Buttle of Coolafancy, John P. Hetherington of Queen's county, and Joseph M'Cormick of Smithborough. An increase of eighteen hundred and fifty-nine in the membership was reported. And "The General Principles of the Methodist Constitution," after a careful examination of their details, were fully and warmly adopted.

Within a few weeks of the close of the Conference, there was at Athlone, a sad display of that unchristian spirit which too often marked and marred the dissensions of this period. In this town, the entire Society, with the exception of one old man and a few soldiers, left the preachers. Therefore, notwithstanding the decision of the Court of Rolls in regard to the Derry chapel, the seceders determined to take forcible possession of the house there. Accordingly, during a service conducted by Messrs. Clegg and

Sterling, a number of persons entered, raised a loud clamour, ordered the preachers from the pulpit, and, on their refusing to leave, dragged them out with great violence and beat them most unmercifully. Recourse had to be made to law, the case was tried at the quarter sessions, and as the preachers did not press for the punishment of their assailants, but simply that their own rights might be protected, nominal fines were inflicted on the traversers, and the premises secured to the Conference.

Early in August, Mr. Averell visited the Longford circuit, preaching at Longford, Keenagh, Mohill, Drumsna, and other towns, in addition to some country places, and as one of the preachers who travelled there at the time observes, "his visits were eminently acknowledged of the Lord, and many were greatly profited by his ministry." Soon afterward, proceeding northward, we find him on the Newtownstewart circuit, where great crowds attended his preaching. While on this excursion, he visited Letterkenny, where he was the guest of the rector, the Rev. Joseph Stopford, D.D. The doctor, a true Christian and laborious minister, happened to be engaged in visiting some of his parishioners; and on his return home, Mr. Averell remarked that if all the clergy were as faithful in the discharge of their duties as he and his curate, there would not be much necessity for Methodist preachers. Dr. Stopford replied that he did not agree with him, and proceeded to give as his reason, the peculiar adaptation of Methodism to reach the masses, and the success which had accompanied the labours of the itinerants.

From Letterkenny, Mr. Averell returned to his residence at Mount Salem. Immediately after his arrival, he received a letter from Dublin, announcing the death of his friend Arthur Keene, Esq., and requesting him to come to the city to conduct the funeral service. He at once complied, and on the following Sabbath, preached in South Great George's street, with special reference to this bereavement, to a crowded and deeply affected audience. Mr. Keene had suffered much during his last illness, but was patient and resigned, trusting in God. On the last morning he spent on earth, his children having assembled around his bed, he took an affectionate leave of them each, and then said, "Satan has thrust sore at me, but every doubt is removed—the pleasant land is in view." It now appeared as if, like Stephen,

he saw heaven's glory, and exclaimed with holy joy, "I see a Wesley, a Fletcher, a Brooke, as if waiting to conduct me. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly and take me home." He then reclined his head on the pillow, and his ransomed spirit passed from its earthly tabernacle to the "house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

Although many members who had left the Wesleyan Society returned, the division had not completed its work, but continued to extend to circuits previously united. Soon after Conference, the secession took place at Cork, fourteen leaders having left, with about one hundred members, and joined the Primitives, while others resigned and refused to be connected with either party. "We committed our cause," says James Field, "to Him who judgeth righteously, appointed new leaders to most of the broken classes, and, thank God, in the course of nine months regained our ground in point of numbers. We have now more deep, solid, piety than ever I remember in this city before. We have also peace and prosperity in all our borders." To one who had taken offence, this devoted leader writes thus: "All manner of evil, I am well aware, is spoken of me; but, blessed be God, I suffer for righteousness' sake, and I suffer with the preachers. I have honourable fellow-sufferers, the most so under heaven. I am their decided friend: this is crime enough. Did you know me, you would not so hastily conclude that James Field had relinquished old friendships to form a party. I have not so learned Christ. From the day I forsook the world to this, I have endeavoured to increase the party of Christ. And shall I not continue to do so through evil and through good report? I will, God being my helper; and no other party will I ever form."

Mr. Summerfield, sen., having been for some time engaged in a foundry at Cork, John, at the call of his father, removed from Dublin to that city, and entered promptly on business; but soon had to abandon it, to engage exclusively in Christian work. The Cork Wesleyans were charmed with the youthful orator, and the Lord greatly blessed his work, as well as that of the ministers of the circuit. On September 2nd, he writes, "Blessed be God, His word is running and is glorified, the Society is prospering, sinners are brought to God, and the congregations increasing. On Sunday week I preached to an immense audience in Patrick street chapel,

at seven in the evening, much larger than had been known since the separation." Early in October, he went to Fermoy, and preached in the court-house. Clonmel and Waterford were next visited; and thus continued his evangelistic tour until he had been to all the circuits in the south of Ireland; and in every instance large numbers assembled to hear. In thus travelling about, he came across Mr. Ouseley, who writes concerning him: "I never heard such a young man for his time, no, nor for any time. Crowds run after him everywhere. He is humble and holy. I pray God to keep him so."

Pleasing reports of success were written from many circuits. Mr. Cobain states that the Spirit of the Lord was poured out in rich abundance on the Armagh circuit. Mr. Crozier gives a most cheering account of the work on the Enniskillen circuit; and Mr. Irvine of Killashandra tells how sixty souls were set at liberty during a love-feast there.

Messrs. John Hamilton and John Armstrong were appointed to the Killashandra and Cootehill mission, where, notwithstanding much opposition and numerous privations, they did a noble work. Some of their experiences were racy enough. At a place called Carrowmore, while the hostess prepared a cake for breakfast, Mr. Hamilton spoke to her about her soul, and she wept bitterly. After a little he proposed prayer, and while pleading for the salvation of her soul, rocked the cradle, turned the cake on the pan, and led the penitent to the foot of the Cross, so that she rose rejoicing in the Lord her Saviour. On arriving at another place, and inquiring who lived on an adjoining hill, the missionary was informed, it was a careless Protestant who went to no place of worship. "Then," said he, "I will try him." "You need not," answered his host. "I will in the name of the Lord," said the preacher. So he went, and invited the stranger to the service in the evening. The man began to make excuses, but the missionary persevered and succeeded. On returning to the neighbourhood, Mr. Hamilton went again to visit the man, who on seeing him took to his heels across the country. The preacher followed, and on overtaking him, insisted on their having prayer together, and then inquired if the other would come to preaching. "Yes," said the man, "I will, and every time you come here, for I see you are more concerned about my soul than I am myself, and

with the help of God, I will take another course." Thus he was led to decide for the Lord.

The following testimony, borne at a love-feast at Bailieborough, by a convert from Popery, may be regarded as a specimen of many others of a similar character. "I stand," said the speaker, "a witness for Jesus; I used to say my prayers on beads, and go to mass; when I happened to hear a missionary preach, I then felt that I was a sinner, and went regularly to hear these men of God. In this I met with great opposition from my father, who told me I must either give this up or leave his house. I made my choice to go, and next morning went away weeping, with my little flitting in a handkerchief. My good Lord took me up, and opened my way. I got married to a godly woman, who has been a great blessing to me; and now we are able to lodge the preachers, and a class meets in our house. To God be all the glory!"

While travelling this mission, Mr. Armstrong preached in the market at Castleblayney, and met with opposition, but by singing a verse of an Irish hymn, he succeeded in calming it down. On another occasion, having conducted a service in the open air, he expressed his willingness to return and preach again if any person would give him accommodation. A decent countryman came forward at once and invited the preacher to his house, and a day was fixed. In due time the missionary met with a kind reception, and had a large congregation; but on the following morning found that the tail of his horse had been cut off. The host was greatly annoyed, and could with difficulty be pacified. His wife, who had been a Romanist, suggested that he should look for the hair, which he did until it was found; and then she sewed it to the leg of a stocking, drew it up over the stump, and fastened it to the saddle. "This," said Mr. Armstrong, "I made use of for a few months till the hair grew, and then cast it away. When I entered a respectable town, I always put my hand behind to see that my tail was all right!"

At Portaferry, Mr. Lanktree succeeded in getting the chapel rebuilt, although the Society was small, and in very humble circumstances. Here also was converted at this period, Ellen Gribbin, "The Boatman's Daughter," the story of whose religious experience, devoted life, and happy death is told with such

touching pathos and beauty by Alfred Barrett. Irish Methodism presents many similar examples of deep piety in humble life, which if published would afford a rich treat to all interested in "the short and simple annals of the poor."

Mr. Tackaberry paid a visit to the metropolis, and, notwithstanding the feeble state of his health, preached occasionally. Referring to one occasion at Gravel walk, he says the word was accompanied with heavenly unction. After the service, an aged woman waited on him to say, she had been seeking the Saviour for four years, and had then found Him. The young local preacher also ministered in the other large chapels, and could say in these exercises, "My loving Lord gives me moments of refreshing, coming from His presence. I do rest in Him. O, what blessed service! O, what sweet employment! Glory to my God!"

Attempts sometimes were made to turn the Methodist preachers into ridicule; but in general they failed. The following incident is a striking illustration of this. There was a farmer in the county of Down who, having two sons, the elder wild and careless, and the younger truly pious, bequeathed his interest in the farm to the latter. As the will was witnessed by one of the itinerants, Mr. Thomas Brown, the disinherited son resolved to contest the disposition of the property on the ground of undue influence by the preacher, and the suit was tried at the assizes. The case of the plaintiff was placed in the hand of a Roman Catholic barrister, named Scriven, a great bully, who intimated to his friends at the bar, the fun he would have out of the Methodist. So when the time came for the cross-examination of Mr. Brown, Scriven commenced by inquiring, "Who are you?" "Thomas Brown," replied the witness. "Yes," proceeded the barrister, "but I want to know how you live." "I generally rise at six," answered the other, "take an early breakfast, conduct family worship, read, visit, and attend to other matters." "That is not what I want to know; but how do you get your bread?" "Generally at the baker's, but sometimes Mrs. Brown makes it." "No, no," said the irritated lawyer, "How do you live?" "How do I live?" "Yes, how do you do?" "Very well, thank you." "Come now, Mr. Brown, aren't you a Methody parson?" "I am a Methodist preacher." "Yes,

and you wanted to get this property for one of the lambs of the valley." "I don't understand you." "Don't you call your people lambs of the valley?" "I don't talk nonsense." "Do you mean to say I am talking nonsense?" "No," replied the preacher, "but if any of my people spoke thus I would say they were." "Do you keep the consciences of your people in your pocket?" "Do I keep the consciences of my people in my pocket?" "Yes, you know ministers keep the consciences of their people." "Does your minister keep your conscience?" "Yes, of course." "Is he in the court now?" "No," replied Scriven. "Then, my lord," said Mr. Brown, addressing the Judge, "I appeal to you whether it is right I should be subject to this questioning by a man who acknowledges that he has no conscience." Of course the laugh was turned against the counsel, who retired from the contest, and the will was upheld.

In August, Ouseley made a tour through the north, of thirty-two days, during which he travelled four hundred miles, and preached, either in or out of doors, almost incessantly. Then having rested at home for a day or two, he returned to Londonderry, where he preached with uncommon power, and held a love-feast. Mr. Crookshank says that at this service he received such a baptism of the Holy Spirit, in sanctifying fulness, as made him unspeakably happy in the love of Christ. A Roman Catholic schoolmaster, also, who had heard the missionary preach in the previous week, came that morning seven miles to hear him again.

The devoted evangelist then journeyed southward, until he came to the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, where his labours were greatly acknowledged of God, no less than four hundred and forty being led to join the Society in about six weeks. These new members included some remarkable triumphs of Divine grace. A noted pugilist in Wicklow, named George James, went to hear the missionary on Christmas evening, being under engagement to serve as second to another boxer, in a match arranged for the following day; but the Lord arrested him. That night, George decided for Christ, and at the close of the service set off to see Connor and said, "I must not go with you to that bad work. No, no, I must not go. I have put it out of my power for ever; for I have joined the Methodist

Society." Connor found another second, and fought out his match desperately. But in a few weeks, this man also, with tears streaming down his face, came to the missionary, and requested his name to be entered as a member of the Society.

At the service in Carnew, the people so thronged that they trod one upon another, and two or three were seated on each step of the pulpit. While the missionary spoke of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, one who was present says, such a power rested on the people as he never witnessed before or after. The preacher was obliged to conclude his sermon, and attempted to get among the people to direct the penitents to Christ, but those on the pulpit steps could not move, and he had to climb over the other side. When he came to the Rev. John Frith, the curate of the parish, he said, "Kneel down, my son in the Gospel, and I will pray that the Holy Ghost may come upon you. God will make you an able minister of the New Testament." Mr. Frith, as far as possible in the crush, bent forward, and Ouseley, placing his hands on his head, prayed for him. That night the missionary was the guest of the curate, concerning whom it was reported that Ouseley had made him a Methodist. The rector, the Hon. and Rev. R. Ponsonby, resolved to remove him, but several of the local nobility and gentry held him in such esteem, that they said, if he was dismissed they would attend church in the adjoining parish. The curate testified boldly to the spiritual good he had received through the blessing of God on the labours of the devoted Ouseley,—being one of his many spiritual children among the clergy of the Established Church.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1819.

THE legal strife resulting from the unfortunate division of 1816, alas ! still continued. The judgment of the Master of the Rolls, in the case of the Londonderry house, was decisive, so far as concerned all property settled on the Conference, and thus twenty-five chapels were regained from the hands of trustees, who held them for the Primitive Society. There were, however, a number of preaching-houses, including those at Tuam, Turlough, Coolafancy, French-church street Cork, Keenagh, Aughrim, Springfield, Ballyconnell, Derryanvil, Blackwatertown, and Moyallan, which had not been thus settled, and therefore were lost to the Wesleyan Connexion. There were also a number of buildings not given up to the Conference, either because the terms of the trust were not in accordance with the model deed, or the documents were not forthcoming, and the title to these houses could only be settled by fresh and distinct appeals to the Court of Chancery. One of these cases was that of the old chapel and residence at Limerick, which, owing to the omission of a clause in the assignment, the Primitives succeeded in retaining. Another was the house in Charlemont. In 1818, a petition was presented to the Lord Chancellor, by Messrs. Ridgeway and Gilcriest, the preachers of the circuit, and Mr. White, a member of the Society, stating that the late Mr. Bates, who in 1773, had erected this house, conveyed it to his son Samuel, James Dickson, and five others, in trust for the Methodist Conference, and praying that this deed might be brought into court for examination, and the premises vested in new trustees for the use of petitioners. The case came on for hearing, before the Master of the Rolls, on January 26th, 1819, and Messrs. Bates, Dickson, and Byers, having sworn that they had not the document in question, that they believed it never existed, and that the chapel had not been

appropriated exclusively to the use of the Methodist Society, his Honour refused to grant the prayer of the petitioners. In the case of the Clones chapel, however, the Court decided in favour of the Conference, with costs.

Turning our attention from these unpleasant litigations to the evangelistic work in which the servants of God were engaged, we find tokens of abundant success. The gracious revival in Arklow was followed up by a visit from Messrs. Taylor and Tackaberry, when sixty persons were awakened to a sense of their sinfulness, and joined the Society. Thus the membership, which at the previous Conference had been only forty, was now increased to two hundred. Concerning one of these additions, a sergeant whose backslidings were healed, Mr. Tackaberry states that such a change in the countenance of a man and in so short a time he had hardly ever witnessed. Reilly in writing to Ouseley says, "I cannot express my astonishment at the work in Arklow, since you and brother Noble were there. The most extraordinary conversions which I have ever seen or heard of, have taken place." The subjects of this great change, of course, were various, some very respectable, others abandoned, one at least an Atheist, and several avowed persecutors. The veteran missionary, journeying about with unflagging zeal, soon returned to the town where thirty-three more, including two Romanists, were enrolled in the classes. At Bandon, he says, "The word of the Lord was like fire among the people, the piercing power thereof made them roar for mercy, and thirty-nine new members were added, making a total increase, since Conference, of two hundred." At Cork, the additional members brought in amounted to eighty; at Waterford, to twenty-two; at Clonmel, upwards of one hundred; at Carlow, about one hundred; at Newtownbarry, upwards of one hundred; at Enniscorthy, sixty; at Wicklow, one hundred; and at Limerick, one hundred and eighty-six. Such a successful evangelistic tour, extending over a period of only six weeks, from January 11th to February 22nd, during which "little less than eight hundred souls" were converted to God, is probably unparalleled in the history of Methodism. On March 27th, John Hill writes that he received a letter from Mr. Noble, stating that fifteen hundred members had been added to the Society.

Mr. Noble was so completely exhausted by the strain involved

in this laborious work as to require rest ; but Ouseley, with undiminished strength and ardour, continued the hallowed toil. For a further period of six weeks, he was accompanied by Reilly during an excursion that included nearly all the southern counties ; and wherever they went, the Lord accompanied His word with marvellous power. It was also most cheering to find that in every instance the work was well sustained by the circuit preachers, so that, instead of any reaction or declension in interest, there was considerable further extension. Thus at Limerick and Newtownbarry, the increase was doubled, and at Carlow, Ennis-corthy, and Wicklow, it was trebled.

To the spiritual success of this period, no doubt the labours of John Summerfield largely contributed. At the close of February, he arrived at Cork, having preached fifty times, and travelled three hundred and sixty-two miles, from the time he left Dublin seven weeks previously. This tour on horseback, and in winter, while in delicate health, was a wonderful effort ; but the Lord sustained and strengthened him. During his visit to Limerick, eighty were led to decide for God. In spring, the youthful and eloquent evangelist made another tour through the country, and on to Dublin, preaching as usual to crowded congregations. A week afterward, having left the metropolis, we find him at Nenagh, having travelled ninety-six miles and preached ten times. Then he went to Pallas, and thence to Birr, where the Earl of Rosse, and gentry, as well as "the common people" heard him gladly. At the close of the month, he arrived safely at his father's house in Cork. In May, he returned to Dublin, where again he attracted vast audiences, including many of the clergy of other Churches.

On the Newtownbarry mission, Mr. Graham, although it was winter, and he nearly seventy years of age, took his stand in the open air, preaching in markets and fairs, until he was nearly worn out. At Gorey, he met with the most determined opposition, some persons affirming that they would have only one religion, and a crowd raising a loud clamour ; but the brave veteran would not be put down, and soon confounded the rioters. In this aggressive work, a young man named John Stethem Wilson, a native of Hacketstown, rendered the missionary valuable assistance, proclaiming the Gospel by his side, and proving in the midst of strife, bold as a lion. Numerous preaching places were opened,

the services were largely attended, and an extensive awakening took place. On March 21st, Graham writes that it would not be easy to tell the numbers who attended the ministry of Messrs. Ouseley and Reilly, who were indefatigable in their labours; and the Divine blessing accompanied them. A month later, he says, "The blessed work of conviction and conversion is still going on in the Society and congregations. Much of the power of the Lord attends the word in every direction, and much of heaven is found in our meetings. Even those who were open enemies have become friends, and in fact everything seems to give way to the work of God." And again, "One hundred persons have joined our Societies lately, and many have been truly converted. The Romish clergy have warned their people not to hear me; but this does not prevent their hearing the word of life. Some of the poor Romanists have been beaten by their relations and treated spitefully, but several of them have declared that they will not go any more to mass. One man, of good understanding and some learning, who had been a rigid Romanist, has lately renounced mass, and is filled with faith and zeal. He is an excellent Irish scholar."*

Meanwhile Mr. Reilly, having returned to his mission station, continued his devoted and successful labours. Through the whole of the country, the work of God revived and prospered, and many souls were led to the Saviour. "Never," says the missionary, "in the annals of Methodism has been recorded a work more solid, deep, rational, and happy, or more apparent in its fruit."† On one occasion, while conducting a service on the sandy beach, in Arklow, knowing that fish had been scarce for some time, and thus many families had been reduced to destitution, he earnestly prayed that the Lord in His merciful providence, would be pleased to send a supply. Early on the following morning, a man more earnest and grateful in feeling than correct in language, hastened to the house of the servant of God, exclaiming, "The herrins is come! the herrins is come!" The fact was so; and to this day it is gratefully remembered by the people of the town, as a marked answer to prayer.

In the prosperity at this time, Portadown largely participated,

* *Report of the Hibernian Methodist Missionary Society, 1819.*

† *Ibid.*

and Mr. Shillington was one of the foremost in promoting it. A memorable occasion has been often referred to, as a time of special power, when he preached at Baltylum, and a prayer-meeting was held, which resulted in upwards of forty obtaining peace with God. Amongst the large number of persons awakened and led to a knowledge of salvation there were, as might be expected, several members of Mr. Shillington's family, including most of his children. In fact only one of them now remained a stranger to the converting grace of God, and that one was his eldest son, Thomas Averell. He was, however, deeply serious, and attended the means of grace diligently in hope of obtaining deliverance; but for some time apparently in vain. At length on April 2nd, during a love-feast held in Lurgan, at which both Mr. Shillington and his son were present, the latter was enabled to rejoice in the God of his salvation. The consciousness of the Divine favour, which he that day received, was never lost; others doubted but he believed; others mourned an evidence obscured and fitful, but his course was steady and progressive, "as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

A remarkable work of God took place on the Charlemont circuit, through the Divine blessing on the labours of Mr. Joseph M'Cormick. It commenced on Easter Monday, at the Diamond. Suddenly and powerfully the Spirit of God descended on the people, so that numbers were pricked in their hearts and cried aloud for mercy. The revival thus commenced soon spread over the entire circuit, bearing down all before it, and thus hundreds were added to the Church of Christ.

Amongst others converted was a lad of sixteen, named Dawson D. Heather. His talents soon became apparent, and his efforts to do good were encouraged and wisely directed. He became much concerned about his cousin, Richard J. Dawson, with great earnestness and simplicity told him what the Lord had done for his soul, urging the necessity of at once coming to the Saviour; and the word spoken was not in vain, as Dawson soon rejoiced in having obtained "like precious faith." The youthful convert's confidence was soon severely tested. His grandfather, Captain Dawson, with whom he lived, was then a very ungodly man, and much given to swearing. Young Heather felt he could not allow sin to pass unreprieved, and therefore faithfully warned

his relative of this sin, and besought him to turn to God. This was too much for the haughty spirit of the old man, and it afforded him a pretext for opposing his grandson's connection with Methodism, by a peremptory command that he must either give up the Society or leave his house. The grace which enabled Moses to refuse "to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," enabled this young servant of Christ, for conscience sake, to renounce a comfortable home, and go out, not knowing whither he went; but the Lord took care of him.*

Ouseley was now again associated with Noble, and journeyed northward. At Manorhamilton, while preaching in the street, he was opposed by a priest, to whom the veteran retorted with powerful effect, by inquiring, "Is it not one of the six sins against the Holy Ghost to oppugn the known truth? You know that what I am saying is the truth of God; you are sworn to believe it, and yet you oppose it. You are guilty of one of the sins against the Holy Ghost." The priest fled as if for life, leaving the missionary in possession of the field, but after a little while returned and shouted, "The devil take you all, what are you doing there?" Ouseley and Noble next proceeded to Enniskillen, where their visit produced wonderful excitement. They rode through the market, inviting the people to the suburbs of the town to hear the word of the Lord, and about two thousand persons, including many Romanists, responded and left the market, so that all business was suspended for the time being. "The Lord," says Ouseley, "gave us a most solemn season, while tears flowed, and sighs and sounds of prayer were heard throughout the whole crowd."

On May 21st, the missionaries preached in the fair of Ballybofey, to an attentive and deeply affected multitude, who prayed for blessings on them while they rode away. Very different, however, was their reception at Killeter, to which they hastened, and where they were joined by Mr. William Keys. It was the fair day, and the town was filled with wild and ignorant mountaineers, who listened quietly, until some drunken men

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1862, pp. 83-85.

began to push and pull one another. Ouseley addressed them in Irish, but to no purpose; they commenced throwing stones, and the horses of the missionaries, having been struck, took fright and bolted, amid a shower of missiles. Noble received a blow in the head, but Ouseley escaped unhurt. Many of the crowd followed, yelling loudly; but the horses were too swift for them, while those whom the missionaries met, thought they were running a race, and expressed their judgment accordingly: "The little fellow is a good rider, he'll beat the old fellow all to pieces." Mr. Keys, who attempted to follow, was surrounded and stopped, and his horse beaten until it became unmanageable, the girth broke, and the rider fell to the ground. A Romanist, who had previously been impressed at a funeral service conducted by the preacher, then threw himself over him, saying, "You must take my life, before you hurt him," for which he was severely beaten. The saddle and hat were torn to pieces, but no effectual blow reached Mr. Keys; so many endeavoured to strike that they hindered each other; and then quarrelled among themselves. The opportunity was seized by some friends to lead the preacher to a place of safety, where his horse had been previously conveyed, and from which he soon rejoined his brethren. "We reached brother Mathewson's," says Ouseley, "where was a smile of joy and welcome on every countenance; and soon got a great crowd assembled, to whom I preached once more the word of eternal life." The people here had not seen the missionary for several years, yet cherished a grateful recollection of the revival during his former visit, and now were again cheered with a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Nine days later, the evangelists held a field-meeting, about two miles from Ballintra, at which nearly a thousand persons were present, Divine power accompanied the word preached, and the whole congregation appeared deeply impressed. Some retired to unite in commemorating the death of Christ, and others to join in earnest prayer, while many were savingly converted. Next morning, the servants of God rode off to Manorhamilton; the day turned out exceedingly wet, but as a meeting had been published for that evening, nothing could induce Ouseley to rest short of the end of the journey. "What

shall we do?" said Noble, "I am wet to the skin, and my very boots are full of water." "My dear fellow," said his companion, "let us conceit we are in the water, and swimming!" On arriving at their destination, they obtained change of apparel, the people assembled in large numbers, and the Lord blessed them with a season of refreshing from on high. Arrangements had been made for an open-air meeting, near Enniskillen, but the weather having proved unfavourable, those who assembled could not remain in the field; it was therefore proposed that the females should go into an adjoining house, while the men remained outside, and the missionaries preached a sermon each, to all present, both within and out of doors. "The dear men," says Ouseley, "stood outside all the time under the rain, and we, in all the wet, without refreshment or change of clothes, preached again in town, the Lord giving us souls for our hire." The evangelists then proceeded to Dungannon, which they reached completely worn out. This, together with the fact that a magistrate had a short time previously prevented Mr. Bailey from preaching in the street, might have discouraged them; but they resolved, as it was market day, they would go out and preach, even though they should be sent to prison for it. So having sought Divine help in prayer, they went out, took their stand, and met with no interruption whatever.

Mr. Ouseley now permitted his colleague to return home, to rest, while he himself proceeded with his work as usual. Having preached out of doors at Aghnacloy, he went to Monaghan, where he met John Armstrong, "a blessed zealous lad," who for a short time supplied the place of Noble. They mounted their horses and rode through the market, while the people crowded after them, and, though it rained heavily, "stayed most patiently." Ouseley then rode to the house of the Rev. W. H. Pratt, vicar of Donagh, who had always a hearty welcome for the missionary, and remained over the Sunday, preaching in the chapel at Glaslough in the morning, attending church, and then, taking his stand on the steps of the market cross, preached to an audience consisting of the vicar and his congregation, the Presbyterians who had just come from meeting, and a goodly number of Romanists on their way from mass. At this period, with very few exceptions, all the communicant

in the church of this parish were Methodists, the clerk was a leader and local preacher, and there were also a number of godly men in the staff of the local militia.

Of the labours of the twelve months now drawn to a close, Ouseley expresses himself in strong and grateful terms. He had travelled on horseback about four thousand four hundred miles, and says that it had been the "most prosperous year for the conviction and conversion of Roman Catholics" he had witnessed since he began his itinerant course, twenty years previously. While in the *Report of the Hibernian Missionary Society* it is said, "The labours of Messrs. Ouseley and Noble have been attended, through the whole kingdom, with astonishing results. No doubt thousands will bless God in eternity for the efforts of these missionaries during the past year. Their labours which have been unparalleled, have also been accompanied with a similar success in the awakening and conversion of immortal souls. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

The reports for this year from the various mission stations were all most cheering. From Youghal, Mr. Nelson writes, that many had been awakened and converted, and several new Societies formed. At Fermoy, a missionary association was established; at Rathcormack, a neat house was fitted up for religious services; and at two Palatine settlements, the Lord wrought a good work, many of these poor people who had been in a wretched state of ignorance and vice, having been turned to God.

Mr. Francis Stephens, of Killaloe, states that he had visited Milltown Malbay, where the people were nearly all Romanists, vice abounded, and services were seldom held in the church; yet the Lord had been glorified in the preaching of His word. An old man who had been converted from Popery through the ministry of Mr. William Smith, was very useful, and a small congregation of Protestants and Romanists formed, of whom nine were members of the Society. On other parts of the mission also the work of the Lord prospered, a number of Protestants were awakened, and eight Romanists experienced the saving power of the Gospel and became Methodists.

In Galway, Mr. William Cornwall found access to places which had been wholly destitute of gospel instruction. At Banagher,

“a place proverbial for wickedness,” a society was formed of thirty-nine members, including six converted Romanists; and the missionary could not supply all the places that called for his labours. One woman came to Galway from Connemara, and invited him to preach in her house, saying, “Though Mr. Ouseley was far back, yet he never went so far as my country. I have eight children, and if a missionary would come we would receive him gladly.”

Mr. Robert Wilson, who was appointed to Letterkenny, states that there were nearly one hundred souls on his mission under religious concern, one very promising young Romanist had been converted, and there were large openings about Raphoe and Legland.

Concerning Killashandra and Cootehill, where Messrs. John Hamilton and John Armstrong had preached faithfully and successfully in the fields, markets, and fairs, it is reported that thirteen new classes were formed, and two hundred and eighty members added to the Society.

Messrs. Bailey and Tracy had been appointed to the Cookstown and Churchhill mission, at the last Conference; and at the end of twelve months, the former writes that he never closed a year with more peace and harmony, or more pleasing prospects of increasing piety. Though the people were extremely poor, their sincerity and fervent love more than compensated the missionaries for all the privations they endured. “Often have I,” says Mr. Bailey, “seen men and women standing, trembling and weeping in the streets, while I offered to them Jesus and salvation through His blood. The Romanists also in many places confessed the truth.” A Sunday school was opened at Churchhill, in which were one hundred and ninety scholars, two-thirds of whom were Roman Catholics; and also another at Bellaghy, regularly attended by three hundred children.*

In accordance with the request of the Conference of 1818, the Rev. Jonathan Edmondson the President, and his companion, the Rev. George Marsden, came to Ireland early in June. The former made a tour through the northern and western, and the latter through the southern part of the country, and thus made them-

* *Methodist Magazine*, London, 1819, p. 875.

selves acquainted with the work, and by their counsel, sympathy, and public ministrations rendered valuable service to the Connexion. The only detail of either of these tours, we have seen, is that of Mr. Edmondson to Sligo, probably the only occasion on which a president visited this town during his year of office. He was met at Manorhamilton by Mr. Cranston, the junior preacher of the circuit, escorted by him to his destination, and the expense incurred duly entered in the steward's book.

The Wesleyan Conference met on July 1st. The Rev. Jonathan Edmondson presided, and Mr. William Smith was elected secretary. There were placed on the list of reserve, the names of six young men, including John Summerfield, although on account of delicate health, he was considered unequal to the work of the itinerancy. One death was reported, that of John Stephenson, a man of sincere piety, warm affection, and great zeal, whose constitution had been shattered in the West Indies; his end was peace. Notwithstanding the contention which had continued during the year and seriously affected the Societies, there was an increase in the membership of three thousand five hundred and twenty-three. In the Address to the British Conference there is a grateful recognition of the valuable service which the Dungannon Committee had continued to render the Connexion. Nine hundred and sixty-five pounds were subscribed by the preachers to meet the deficiency in the general expenditure.

During the sessions of the Conference, there was realized much of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, and the public meetings were also greatly acknowledged of God, more especially the love-feast and ordination services, while at the missionary meeting Summerfield appeared to carry all before him with his thrilling eloquence. Ouseley and Reilly also seized the opportunity of preaching out of doors, when a great crowd assembled to hear.

The Primitive Wesleyan Conference met in Dublin on July 7th. James Ransom and John Hurst, who had been called out during the year, were received as having travelled twelve months, and there were admitted on trial six candidates, including William Beatty of Ballinamallard, and William Herbert, junior, of Moybane. The number of chapels was fifty-three, seventeen of which had been fitted up, or nearly built during the year, while in thirty-

two other places, temporary accommodation had been found until suitable houses should be erected. The membership was twelve thousand one hundred and eight, being an increase of upwards of four thousand. These, it is stated, were chiefly taken "from among those who were wandering in the dark mountains of sin and error," remarkable outpourings of the Holy Spirit having taken place in whole districts where sin had abounded. A committee was appointed to take such steps as might be necessary, in order to the drawing out of a trust deed that would in a legal manner secure the preaching-houses to the Connexion. Thus an assignment was made of the premises in South Great George's street, Dublin, which was recommended to the Societies, as embodying the best plan for effecting the purpose. By this deed of trust it was stipulated that should the Conference ever depart from the principles established amongst them, they forfeited all right to the property; and so long as any of the members should adhere to Primitive Methodism, without the administration of the Sacraments, they could claim the premises for their own use exclusively. But if such members should cease to exist in the district, then the property should become vested in the Sovereign of the realm, to be disposed of in such a way as his Majesty should think proper. Thus strong measures were adopted to prevent a growth and development, which undoubtedly no power of man could hinder.

Mr. Shine was appointed to labour on the Charlemont circuit, but soon after he entered on his work here, his wife took ill of fever. A leader having called to express his sympathy, the servant of God replied, "Brother, it is all mixed with mercy," and on the very next day, having been suddenly seized with the disease, passed to the region "where the inhabitant shall not say I am sick." Mr. Pattyson, who had been appointed to accompany Mr. Averell, as a general missionary, was therefore sent to supply the vacancy thus created, and says that while travelling the circuit, many were reconciled to God, through Christ. On one occasion at Tamnaghmore, nineteen were converted, including two daughters of a man, who on learning it, exclaimed aloud, "Here, parents, is encouragement for you. I have been praying for these two girls ten years, and God has this day given me the answer." At a quarterly meeting at Dungannon, twenty-five

professed to have just entered into the liberty of the children of God.*

Mr. George Burrows was appointed to Lowtherstown, where the chapel and lodgings were still in the hands of the Primitive Society, owing to a debt due to Mr. Joseph Armstrong, but this was made up, and thus the premises were regained.

A quarterly meeting was held in the recently restored chapel at Enniskillen, during which there was such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit as those present had seldom if ever witnessed before. The preachers, Messrs. Olliffe, Edward Johnston, and Edgerton, felt that little remained for them to do, but to stand still and see the salvation of God, while the whole congregation bowed before the Lord, either in self-abasement of spirit, crying aloud for mercy, or in adoring wonder at the goodness of God. Twenty-seven persons professed to having obtained peace and joy in believing. Thus a blessed revival commenced, which soon spread through the adjoining country, including Brookeborough and Irvinestown, and led to the conversions of a large number, many of whom were added to the Primitive as well as the Wesleyan Societies.

Ouseley also witnessed a very gracious work in several parts of the kingdom, notwithstanding numerous obstacles, large numbers being awakened to a sense of their state, and led to join the Society. In the streets, many Romanists heard the glad tidings of salvation, and not a few attended the chapels, while some travelled miles through storm and rain to hear the word of truth. Reilly having been laid aside for some weeks in a fever, Noble took his place, and Ouseley continued the work alone, sometimes preaching in the open air three or four times a day, as well as in the houses. In one place, he says, the congregations were chiefly Romanists, who refused to be hindered by the priest. A young man in Kerry, who had been a Catholic, and then became an Atheist, was led to hear the missionary, and being deeply convinced of sin and error, fell down on his face, and cried aloud for mercy. At Tralee, a girl connected with the Church of Rome, describing the state of the congregation at one of Ouseley's services, said to her mistress, "O, ma'am, they were

* *Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1876, p. 20.

weeping all around me; and I cried and wept a great deal myself. God forgive me!"

The veteran missionary was encouraged almost daily by hearing of, as well as witnessing, instances of good done by means of his public ministry and writings. Thus a soldier, at a love-feast in Dublin, stated he had listened to Mr. Ouseley preach in the street about eighteen years previously, and was thus deeply impressed, but long endeavoured in vain to banish from his mind what he had heard. When on the field of Waterloo, in the midst of the battle, these truths came before him with increasing force, so that then and there he surrendered himself to God, and obtained a sense of His pardoning mercy. A young man who had read Ouseley's "Letters to Thayer," was thus led to search the Scriptures, and refuse to return to mass. This so alarmed his father, that he applied for advice to the priest, who told him "to tie and beat him for a villain." "If such be the only arguments you can use," said the youth, "they can never convert me;" and nobly resolved to live as a servant in a Methodist family, where he had the advantage of Christian society and instruction, rather than live in comfort at home, deprived of these blessings. An intelligent schoolmaster read some of Ouseley's tracts, intending to answer them, but was convinced of his own errors, abandoned the Church of Rome, and became a member of the Methodist Society. There was also a very blessed work in the counties of Mayo and Sligo, where many Romanists who had heard the missionary preach twelve years previously, assembled with eagerness to hear him again, and thus were savingly converted.

Mr. Graham reports several conversions from Popery. A lad who had obtained one of Ouseley's tracts, became unsettled in his mind and refused to go to mass. The priest came and inquired why he had disobeyed his father, and he answered, "If any man love father and mother, more than Me, says Christ, he is not worthy of Me." The priest then said, "Let him go, he is full of heresy;" and thus the lad escaped to a friend, under whose roof he had Christian liberty. A Roman Catholic girl, to whom the missionary had spoken, abandoned the Church of Rome and joined the Society. Several schoolmasters also left Popery. One of these was denounced from the altar, had his school broken

up, and was about to be publicly excommunicated when he quietly slipped off to the Church.

The Martins of Connemara, are a branch of one of the ancient "Tribes of Galway;" and once possessed a vast estate that might well have been called a principality. It contained upwards of one hundred and ninety-two thousand statute acres, and extended almost uninterruptedly from Oughterard to Clifden and Claggan bay. The extent of the demesne of Ballynahinch may be imagined when it is remembered, that the grandfather of the last possessor could boast he had an approach from his gate house to his hall of thirty miles in length. In parliamentary records his son, Richard Martin, M.P., is chiefly associated with the subject of cruelty to animals, the first Bill for preventing or punishing which was popularly known as "Mr. Martin's Act." The way in which his wife found peace in believing affords an interesting illustration of the quiet work done by Methodism in parts of Ireland, least favoured with the light of the Gospel. Her kindness of heart led her to inquire into the wants of all around her; and having relieved the temporal need, she often longed to be able to do something towards meeting the deeper spiritual want. A young orphan girl was dying without hope of eternal life, and in a state of indifference which shocked those who saw the need of a change of heart, although they had not themselves experienced it. One day, while Mrs. Martin was walking with her eldest daughter, and her mind much exercised on this subject, a sudden shower obliged them to shelter in a cottage. Seated near the fire was a stranger, whom they found to be Mr. William Cornwall. The thought of getting him to visit the sick girl was at once suggested, with what result in her case we know not; but this circumstance led Mrs. Martin to invite the preachers to Clareville, and to assist them in every way in her power. It required no small degree of courage to take such a step at a period when Methodism was so unpopular. An electioneering agent or a priest wrote to Mr. Martin, who was attending his parliamentary duties in London, representing to him that his wife's receptions of such persons would seriously compromise his interests in the county. No one prized popularity more than he did, political success being very dear to him. Yet he replied politely but firmly declining to interfere;

and adding, that as he had always advocated liberty of conscience in favour of Roman Catholics, it would be most inconsistent in him to interfere with his wife's liberty of doing what she considered right in her own house. Nor was he less faithful to his principle of non-interference with conscience when another trial, consequent upon the conversion of a member of his family, awaited him. Naturally desirous that his daughter Georgina, of whom he was justly proud, should be introduced into the circles in which he had long been a favoured guest, he one day proposed her accompanying him to some place of amusement. "Indeed, papa," said the young disciple of Jesus, "I have a scruple about it." "Then, my child," replied her father, "I shall never mention it to you again;" and he never did. Both Mrs. and Miss Georgina Martin proved to be humble, devoted, and consistent followers of the Saviour.

Looking back at the records of these pages, the reader can hardly fail to be impressed with the marvellous progress made by Irish Methodism. Its Societies from being mere auxiliaries to other Christian bodies gradually developed into a distinct, well organized, and scripturally constituted Church. Its ministers increased from sixty-five in 1789, to one hundred and seventy-two in 1819; its membership from fourteen thousand and ten, to thirty-four thousand six hundred and eighty-three; and the amount subscribed to its connexional funds from £381 13s. 6d. to about £5,000, while not less than two hundred and fourteen additional chapels were erected. The people received into its fold were faithfully and lovingly shepherded, being led through green pastures and beside still waters. Missionaries were sent forth to the neglected masses, and thus thousands of nominal Protestants and avowed Romanists were brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. Sunday schools, in which the word of God was diligently taught, were established all over the country, so that multitudes of the young were led to the Saviour. And, notwithstanding the strong claims and pressing demands of the home work, a goodly number of preachers volunteered and were sent to labour in distant lands.

This progress is the more remarkable, considering the circumstances in which, on the death of Wesley, the Connexion was placed, the difficulties and opposition with which it had to contend,

and the existence of numerous imperfections and defects in its system, that had to be remedied. Yet with all these retarding agencies in operation, Methodism steadily and rapidly advanced. Even an agitation that convulsed and rent the Society from its centre to its circumference, instead of paralysing its efforts and destroying its influence, proved a stimulus to increased zeal, and the means of greater success. Preachers and people, Primitives and Wesleyans, continued to proclaim with a trumpet voice, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Heaven's blessing was not withheld, and so "the word of God grew and multiplied."

Ministers and members of other evangelical Churches also felt the quickening influence, and showed signs of vitality to which they had been utter strangers. The Established Church, especially, was greatly blessed through the labours of Methodism. One instance of this advantage out of many will suffice. A young curate, in the county of Down, found his way to a family in connection with Methodism, and was thus quickened in his spiritual life, if not converted. He subsequently was appointed chaplain to the Bethesda, Dublin, where he laboured for upwards of thirty years, and attracted crowds by his evangelical and impressive ministrations. Though not remarkable for commanding intellect, he was highly gifted as a preacher; his voice, appearance, fluent address, deep fervour, and the excellence of his matter, all contributed to promote his popularity, and at length not a few of the *élite* of the metropolis were among his regular hearers. Students, lawyers, physicians, gentry, and nobility, as well as many of the humbler classes attended the Bethesda. In ecclesiastical circles, however, the ministrations of Mathias soon awakened a murmur of disapprobation. The Provost of Trinity College commanded the students, under pain of censure, to discontinue their attendance on the services of the earnest evangelist, and the Archbishop not only refused to license him, but actually inhibited him from preaching in any of the churches in the city. The word, notwithstanding, had free course and was glorified; and the unconsecrated building was sanctified by the Divine presence in saving power. The students continued to attend the services, despite the Provost's interdict, and not a few were among the most regular and attentive hearers, who after-

ward entered the ranks of the clergy, and did a noble work in elevating the tone of Irish Protestantism. Thus the chaplain of the Bethesda, and Methodism through him, rendered far more substantial service to the ministry of the Established Church, than the Regius Professor of Divinity.

The extent to which Presbyterianism in Ireland was quickened and blessed through Methodism cannot be accurately estimated ; but it was evidently much greater than is generally supposed. For at least three quarters of a century, false doctrine continued to spread in the Church, while at the same time, through the Divine blessing on the influence of Methodism, evangelical truth extended also, and its saving power was increasingly realized. It is true that at first the Presbyterian ministers gave to the sect everywhere spoken against, their most determined hostility, expelling from the Lord's table, and even violently treating those who identified themselves with the Armenian heretics. However, in the course of time, as people who had lived in gross sin, entered on a new life and found their way to the places of prayer, the idea gradually dawned on the minds of many that the labours of the itinerants really promoted the true welfare of the Church so dearly loved. Accordingly, in nearly all the principal towns of Ulster, meeting-houses were thrown open, first to Wesley, and subsequently to Coke and Averell. These devoted evangelists preached in them to crowded audiences ; the word was accompanied with Divine power ; and many, in addition to those who attended the ministry of the itinerants, were led to an experimental knowledge of the truth. Although Ulster was the last province in Ireland into which Methodism obtained access, and its progress here at first was exceedingly slow ; yet after a few years, the Society began to extend with such rapidity as enabled it soon to outstrip all the rest of Ireland put together. Thus in 1760, there were one thousand members in Leinster alone, and only two hundred and fifty in Ulster. Fifty-nine years later, the membership in the three southern provinces amounted to about eleven thousand five hundred, while in the north it was more than twice that number. Thus it was in Ulster that Methodism proved most successful. We have before us the names of the leading Wesleyan families, numbering upwards of eight hundred, who at this period resided in the province. Taking from these

all whose religious denomination we have been able to ascertain, and assuming that they give an approximate view of the relative proportion of the number of Methodists connected with the different Churches, we find that about forty per cent. were Presbyterians. Many of these, as well as numerous converts who never became Methodists, did not leave the Church of their fathers, but remained and infused into it a spiritual life and power of which under other circumstances it would have been altogether destitute. It was this religious vitality which led to and sustained the noble and successful effort of Cooke to rid the Church of the incubus of Arianism, a relief which was truly "like life from the dead to the Synod of Ulster;" which set the Church free to move forward with elasticity; and which prepared the people for the glorious revival of 1859, and the Divinely owned labours of Moody and Sankey, the fruits of which are so apparent and so encouraging. But for the influence of Methodism, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, like that of England, would doubtless have long since withered and wasted under the power of a blighting and blasting Arianism.

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